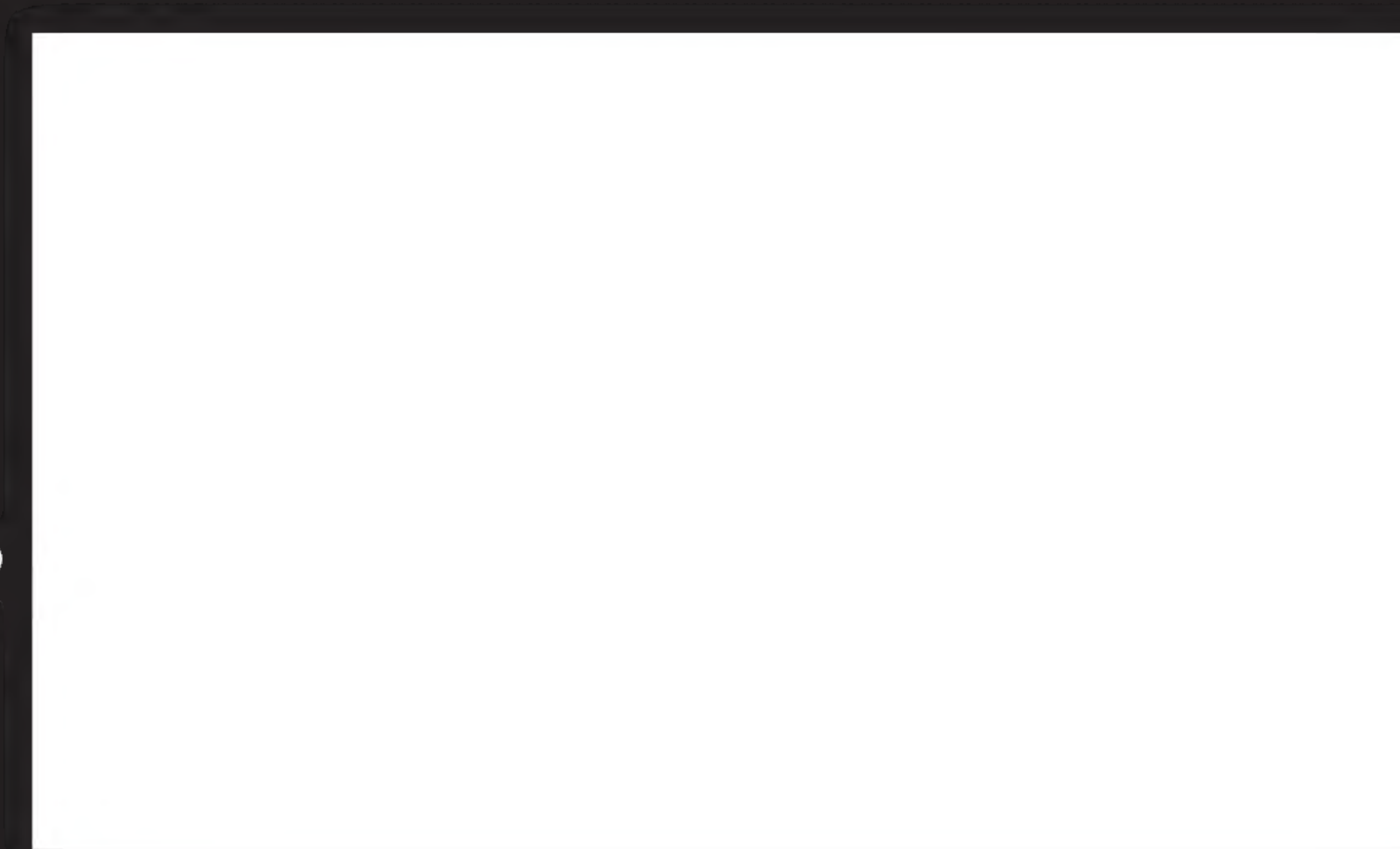


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vol.1

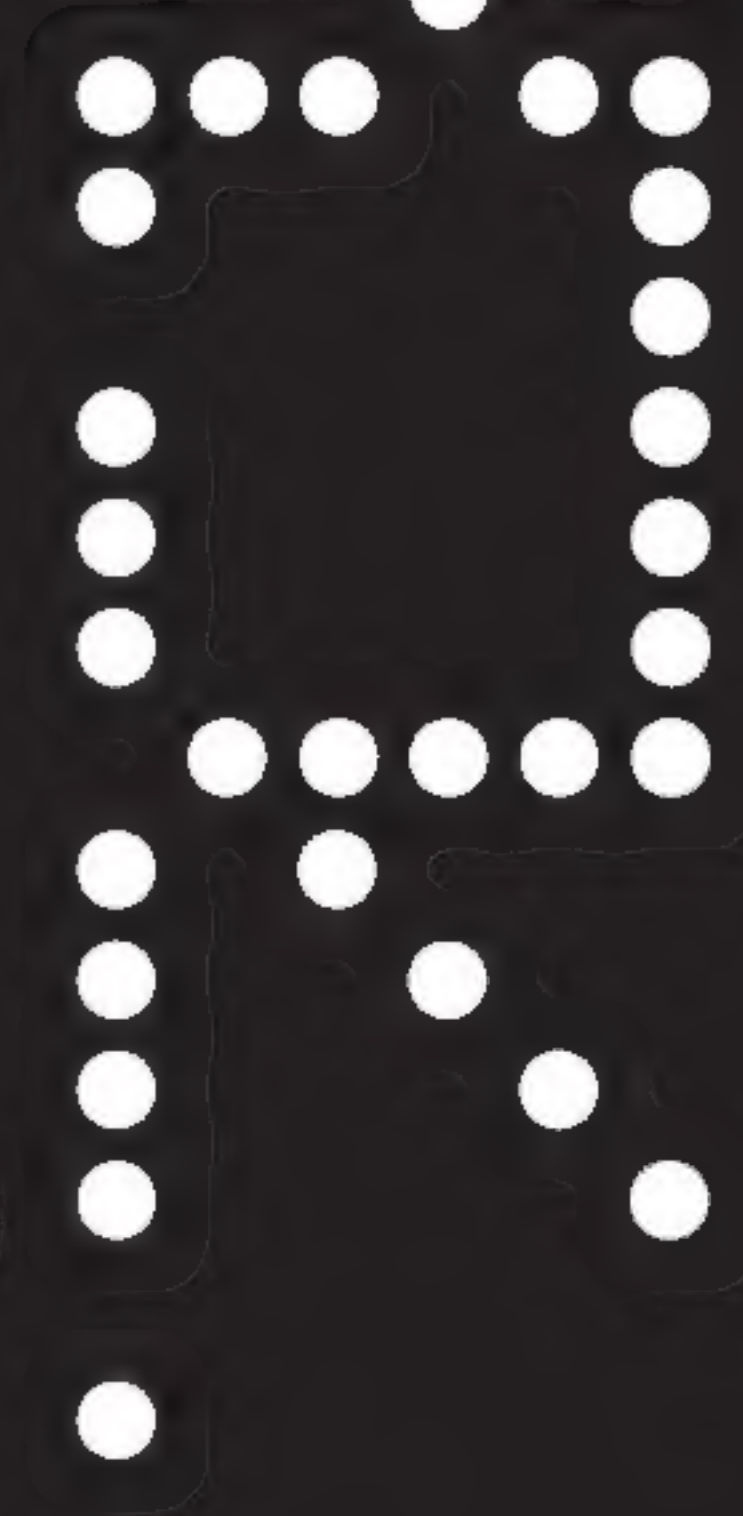
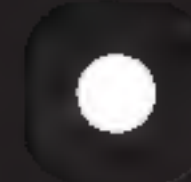
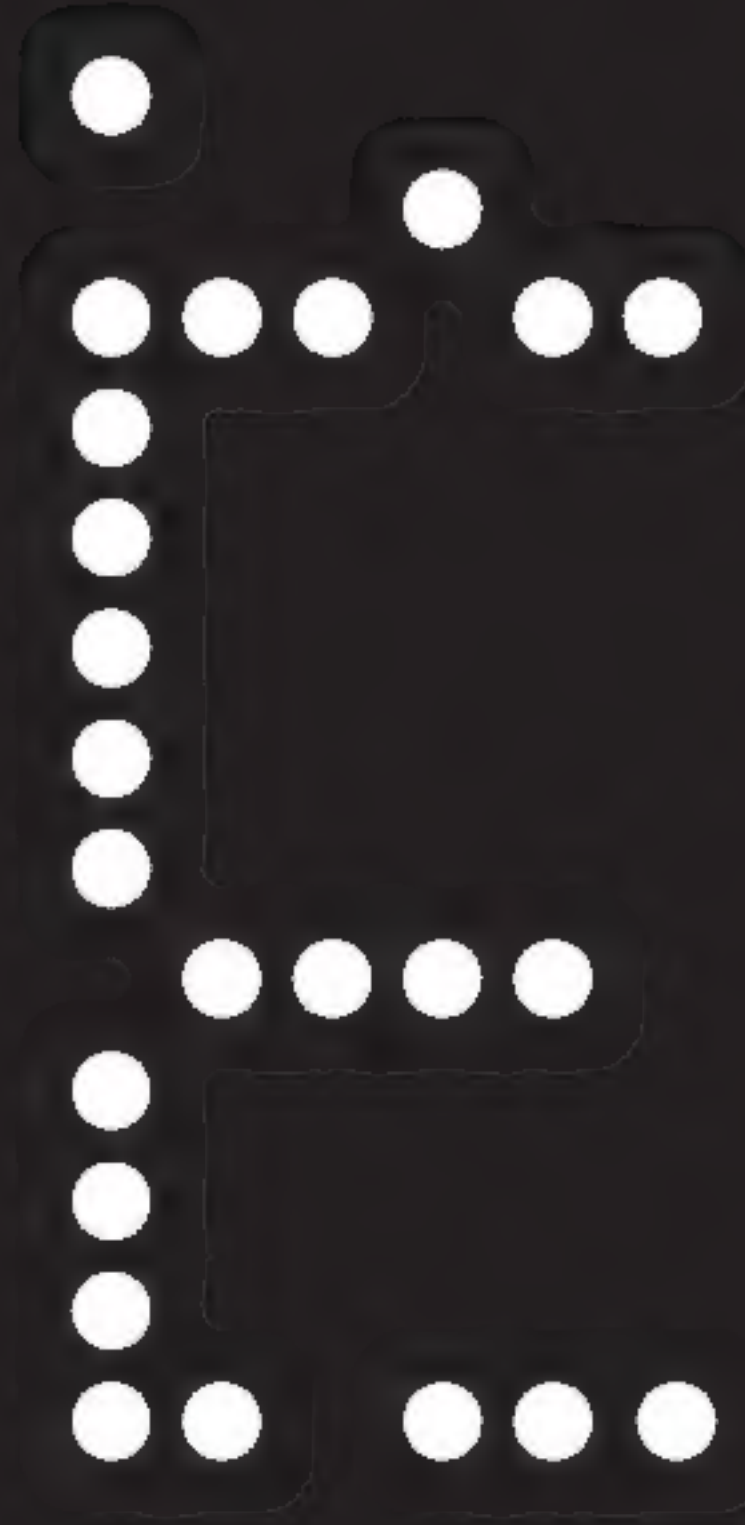
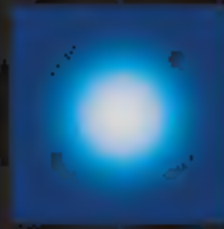
OUT
OF THE
NIGHT

IVAN BRANDON
NIC KLEIN





vol.1



● Drifter
Volume
01

● Originally published as DRIFTER #1–5

● Ivan Brandon
Script

● Nic Klein
Full color art and cover

● Clem Robins
Lettering

● Tom Muller
Logo and design

● Sebastian Girner
Editor

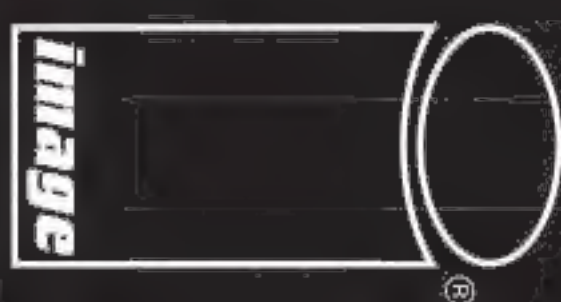
● Nic Klein
Original series cover artist

● Esad Ribic, Cliff Chiang, Jason Latour,
Becky Cloonan, Marko Djurdjević,
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Original series variant cover artists



● DRIFTER created by Ivan Brandon and Nic Klein
AN OFFSET COMICS PRODUCTION

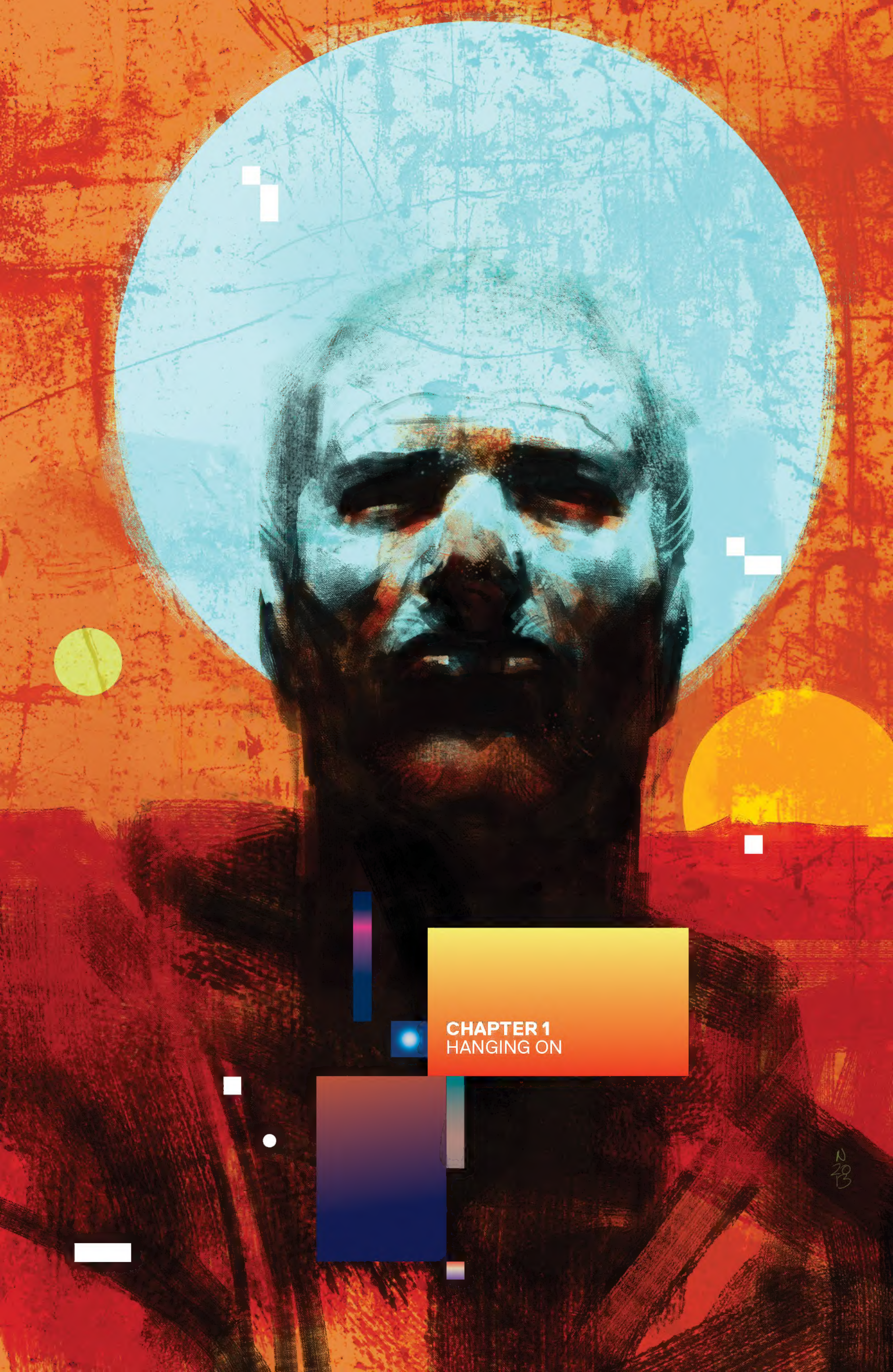
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CHAPTER 1
HANGING ON

N
20
13

UNIDENTIFIED PROJECTILE BREACH IN AFT PANEL LL27

METHANE OVEREXPOSURE
IN SOUTHEAST
PROPULSION GALLERY

ENGINE

11

OFFLINE

ENGINE

13

OFFLINE

ENGINE

15

OFFLINE

PERSONAL
DISASTER IS
IMMINENT

MAYBE IT WAS
SHRAPNEL.

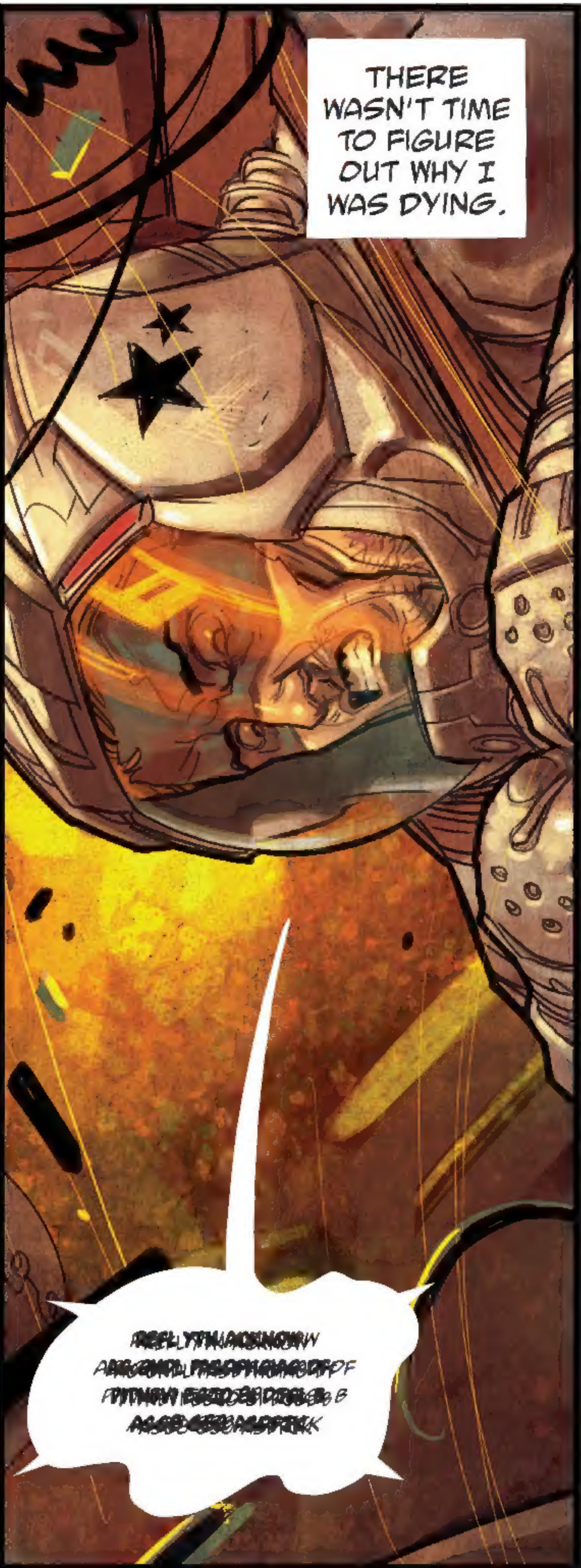




A PIECE
OF ALL THE
THINGS WE'D
LEFT OUT
THERE IN
THE NIGHT.

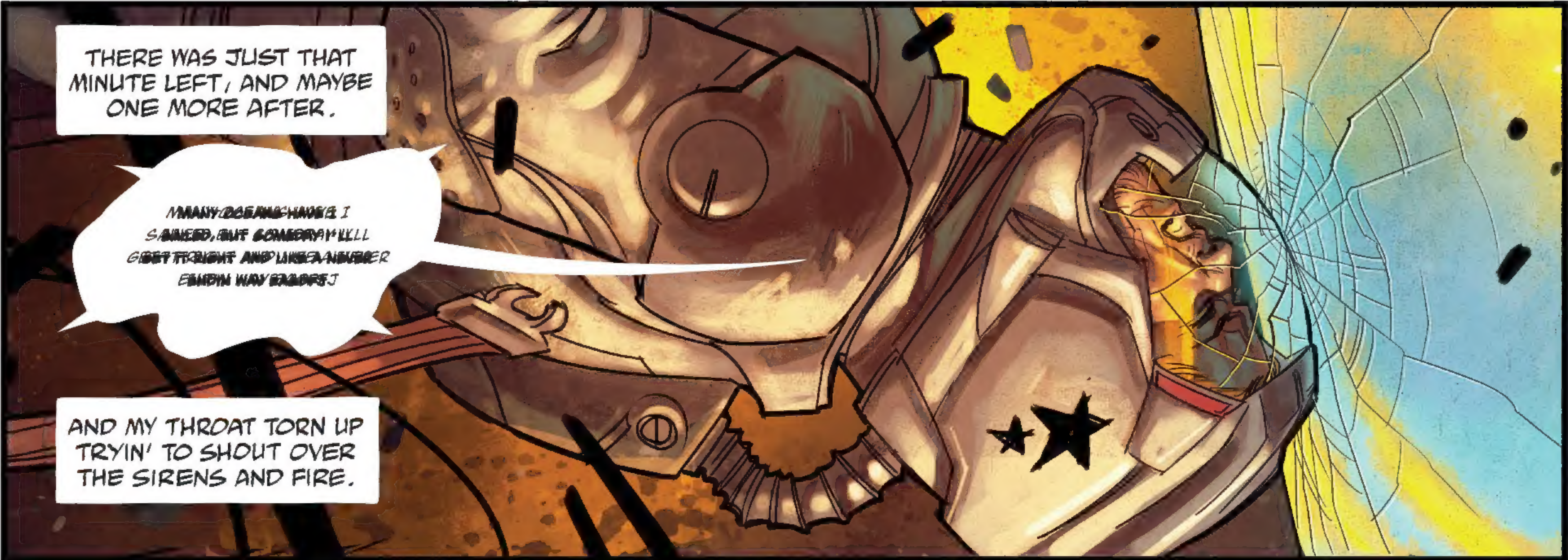


MAYBE IT
WAS THE
THINGS I
DONE/
CATCHING
UP.



THERE
WASN'T TIME
TO FIGURE
OUT WHY I
WAS DYING.

REELLYTHINKING
ABOUT THE
THINGS I
DID
AND
HOW
I
DID
IT



THERE WAS JUST THAT
MINUTE LEFT, AND MAYBE
ONE MORE AFTER.

MANY THINGS I
SAVED, BUT SOME I'LL
GET TO
REMEMBER
FOR
EVER

AND MY THROAT TORN UP
TRYIN' TO SHOUT OVER
THE SIRENS AND FIRE.



AND THEN THE STARS
WERE GONE. AND THEN
EVERYTHING WENT HOT.

AND THAT
WAS IT.



NO LIGHT. EVERY-
THING'S GONE.

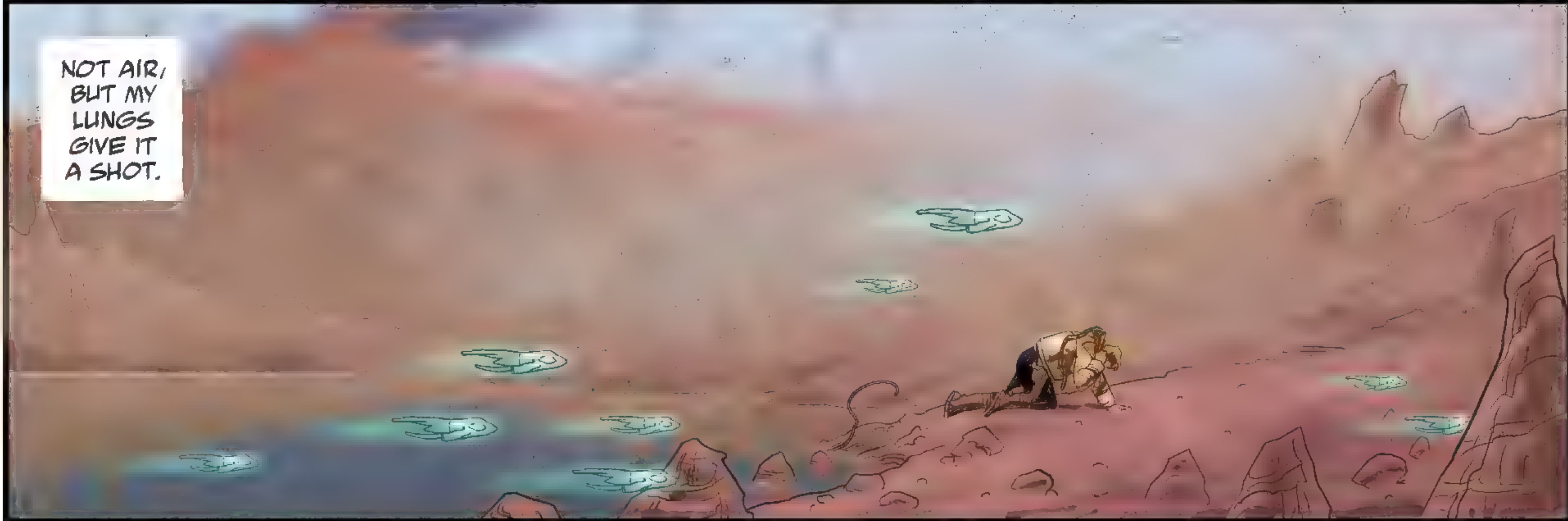
AND THEN
I SEE.

THE SHIP'S
GUTS
AROUND MY
THROAT,
DRAGGING
ME SLOWLY
BACK INTO
THAT DARK.

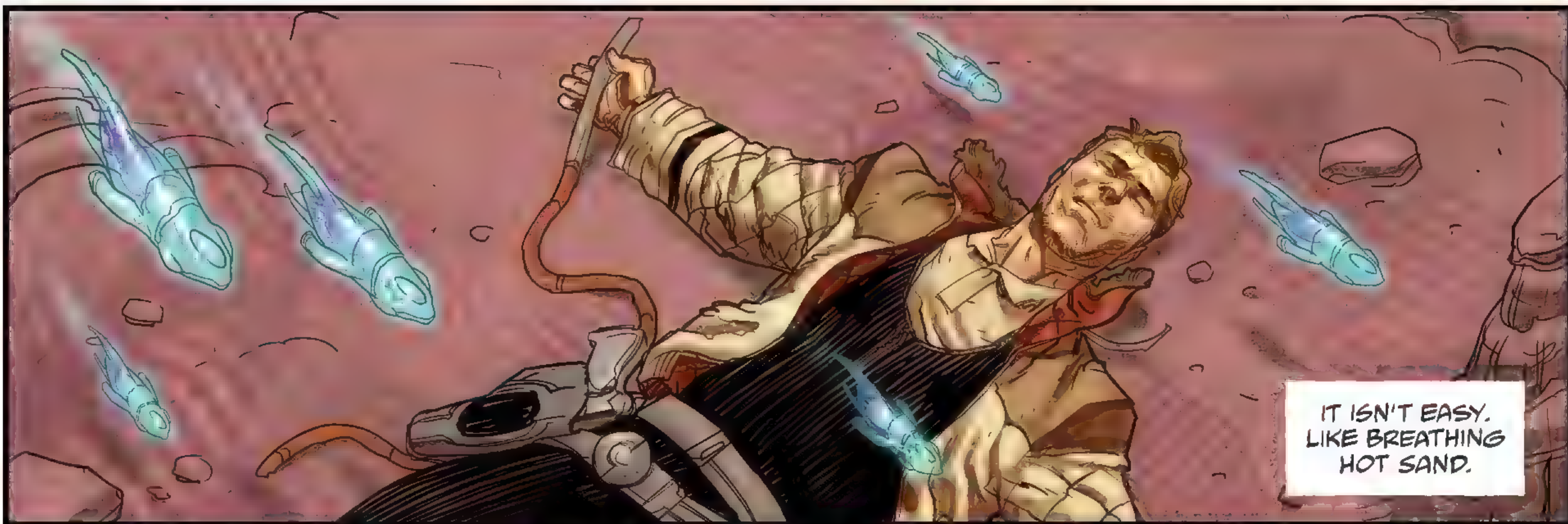
DOWN
ALL THE
WAY TO
LOSING
EVERY-
THING.



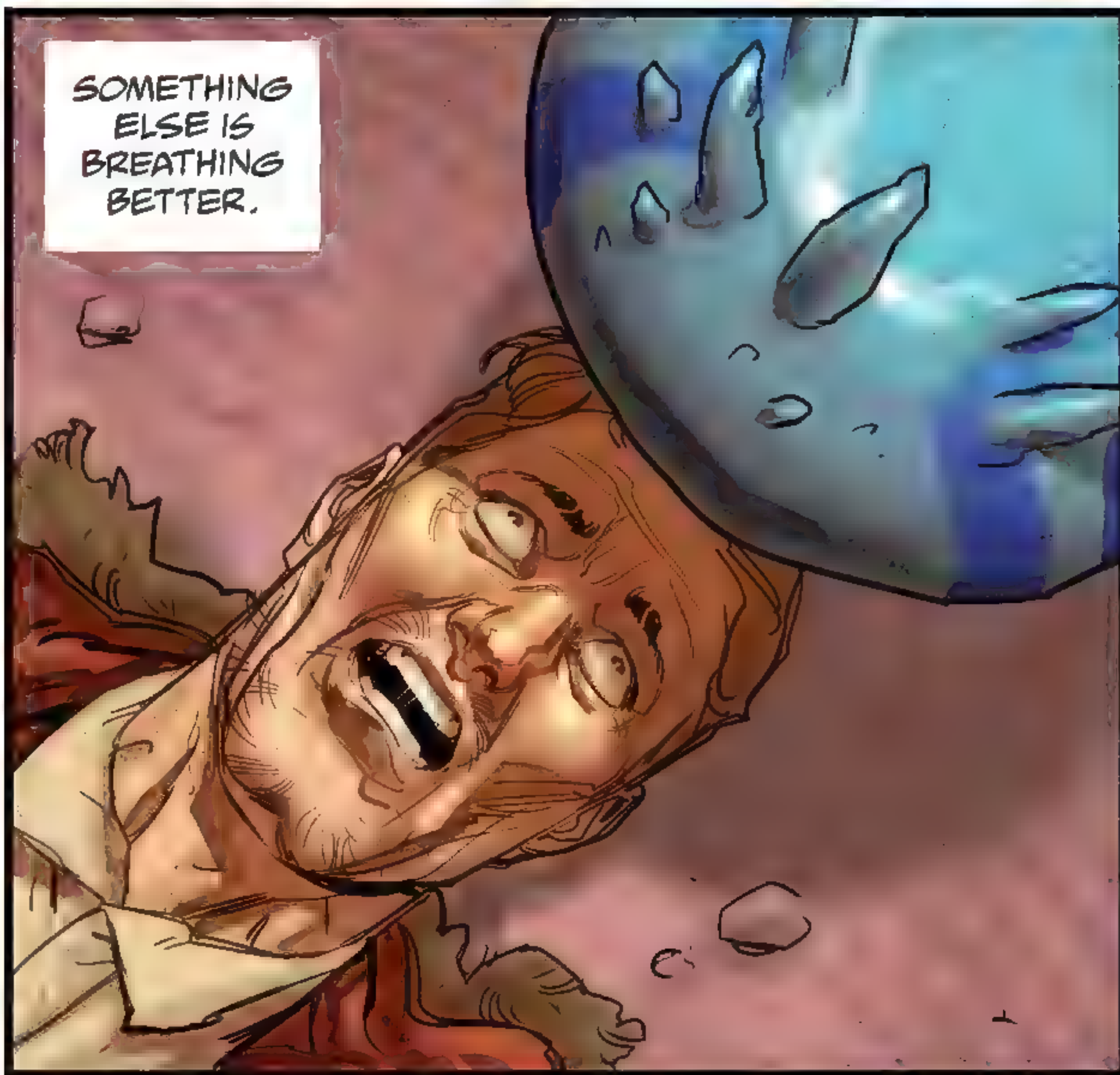
NOT AIR,
BUT MY
LUNGS
GIVE IT
A SHOT.



IT ISN'T EASY.
LIKE BREATHING
HOT SAND.



SOMETHING
ELSE IS
BREATHING
BETTER.



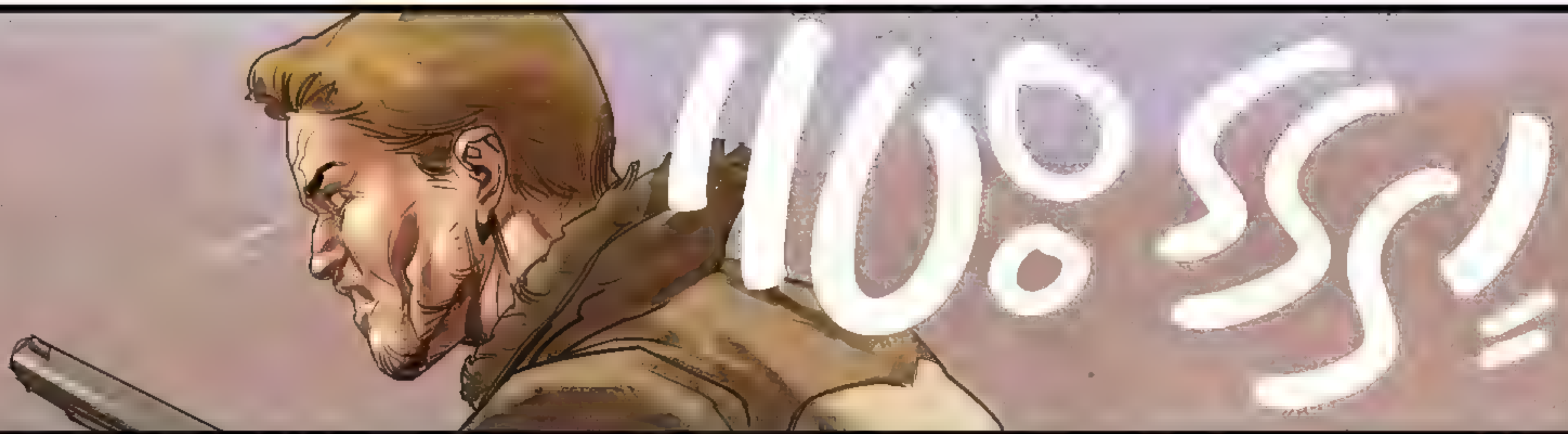
MAKES A
SOOTHING
SOUND AND
THEN IT
SCREAMS
OUT.



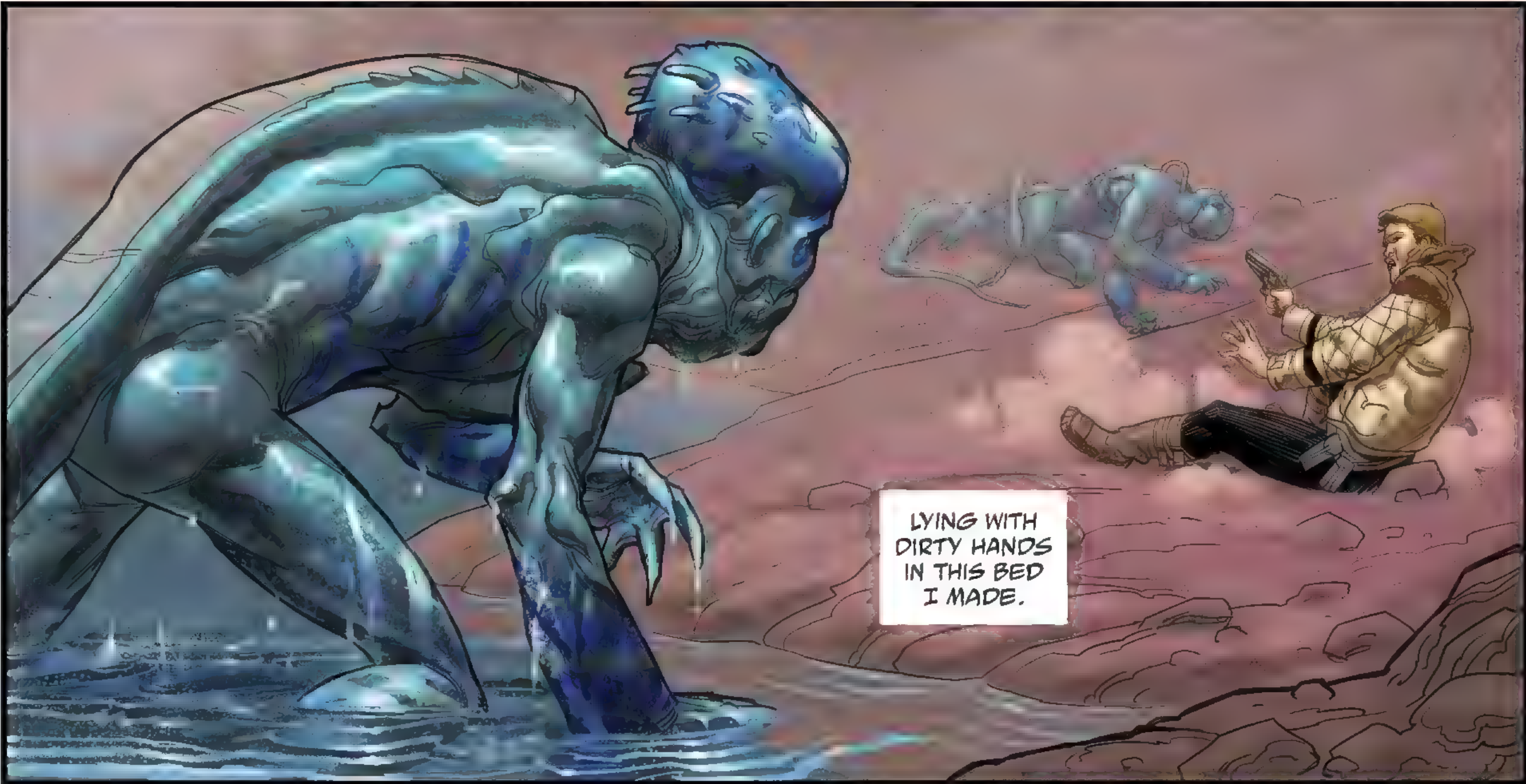
THEN IT
JUST FALLS.



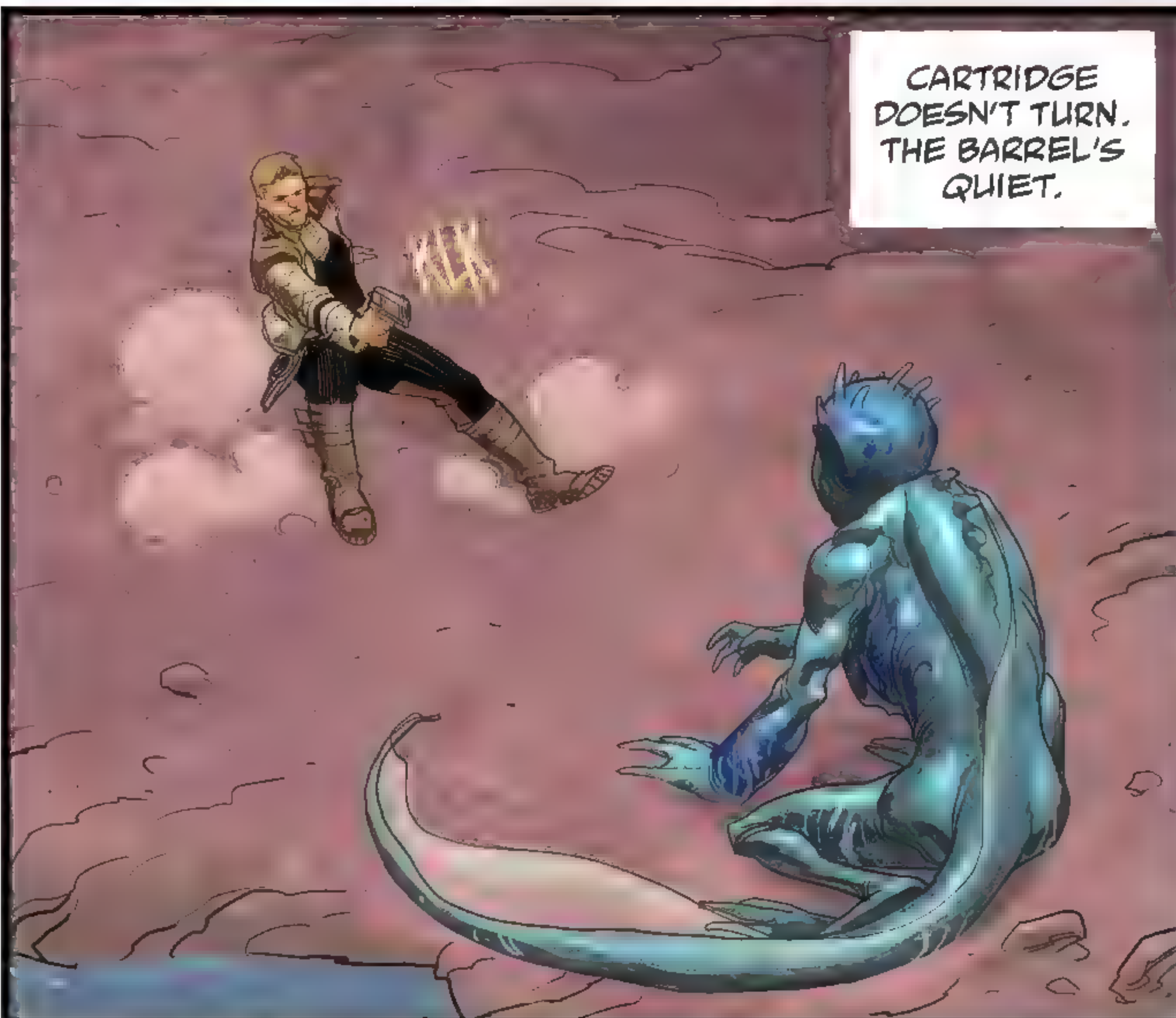
BUT THE
SCREAM
SEEMS TO
FLANK ME.



LYING WITH
DIRTY HANDS
IN THIS BED
I MADE.



CARTRIDGE
DOESN'T TURN.
THE BARREL'S
QUIET.



HAMMER
CLICKS LIKE
A TOY.



I NEVER
KNEW HOW
TO PRAY.



IT DOESN'T STOP TO SEE
WHAT A COWARD LOOKS LIKE.



THE
DYING
THING'S
BREATH
SLOWS.



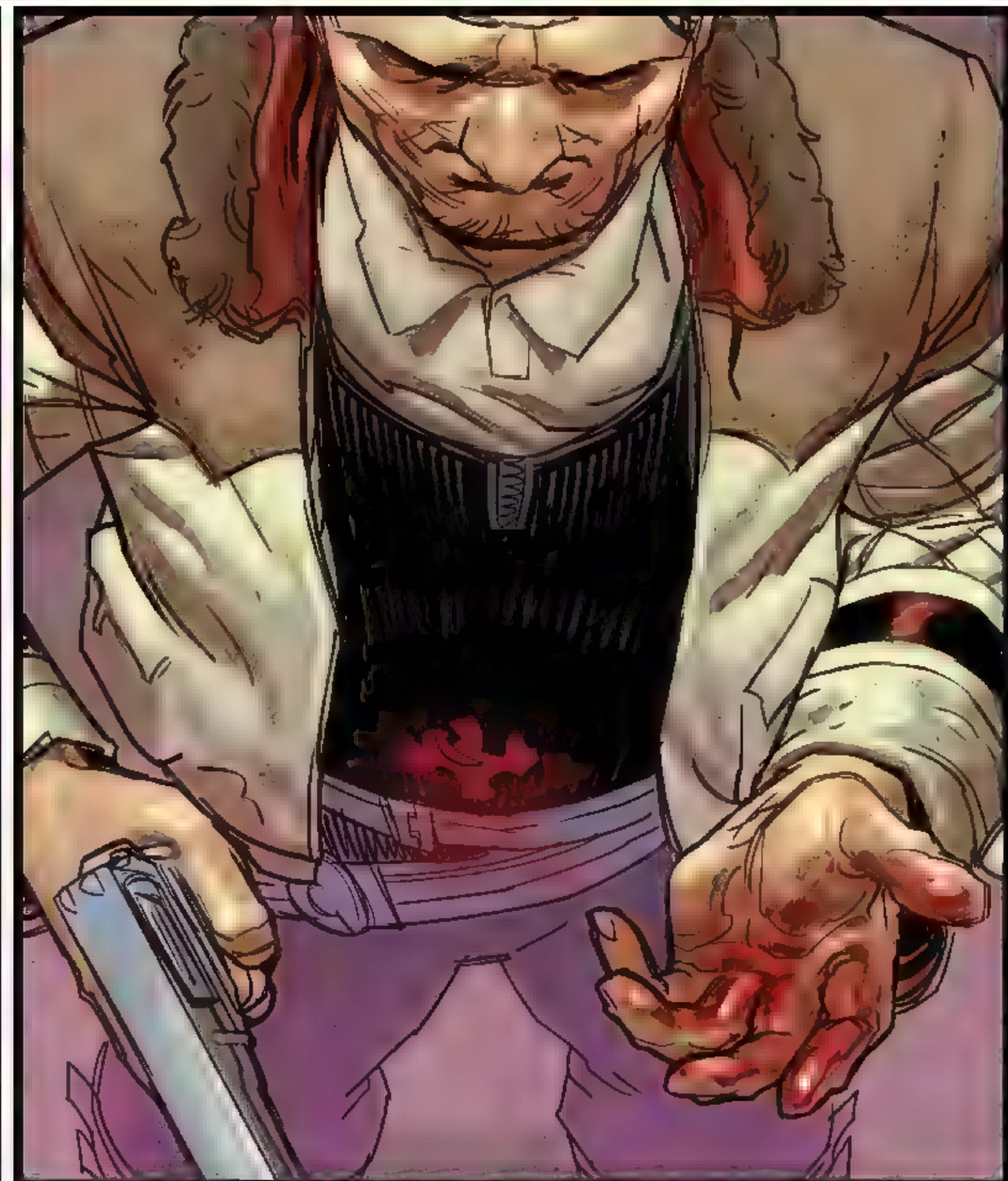
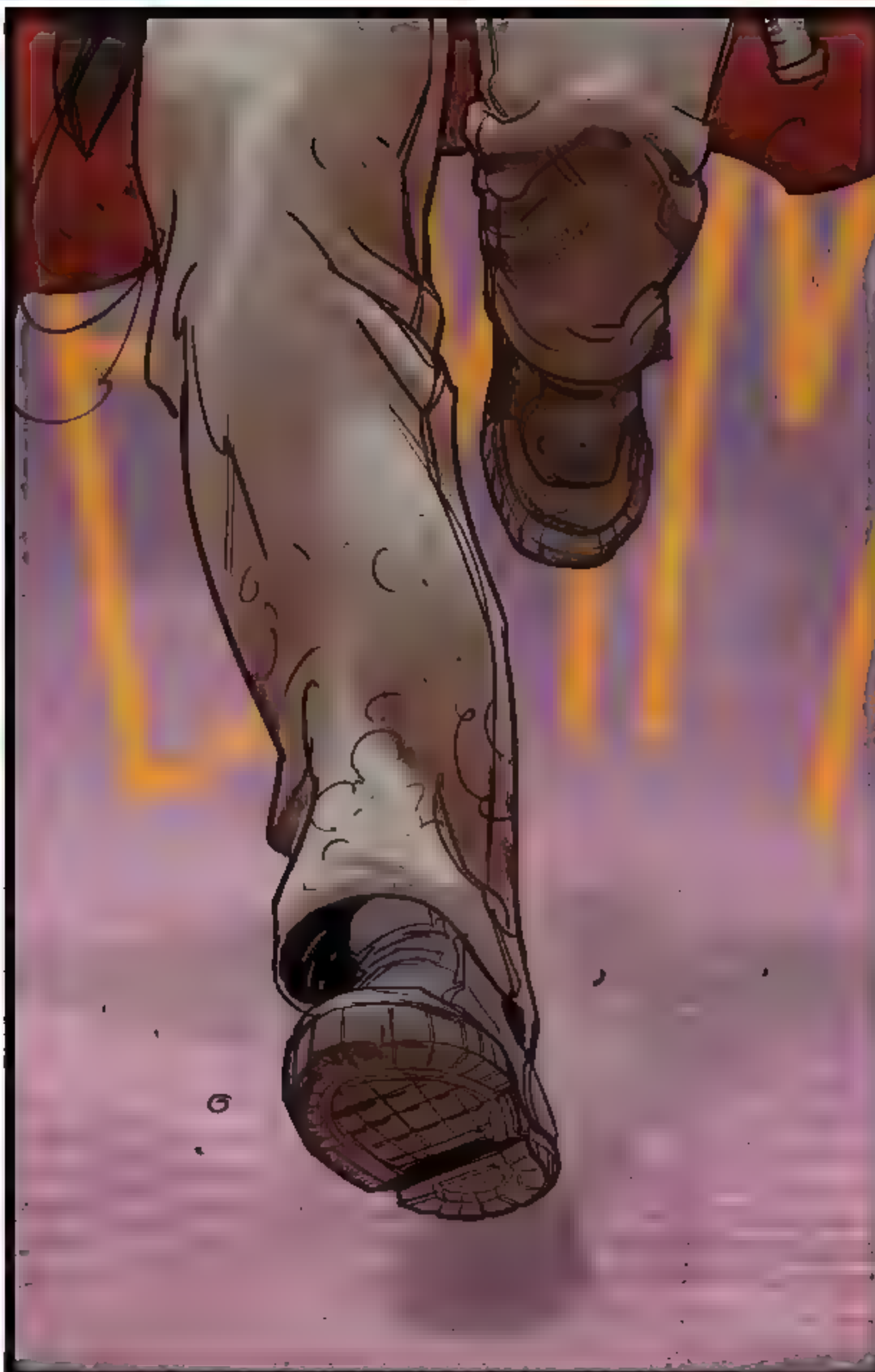
THE
STRONGER
ONE
WHISPERS.



THEY DON'T
STRIKE.

THEY
DON'T EVEN
LOOK.

THEY CONSPIRE
JUST TO LEAVE
ME TO MY FATE.





FELL OUT OF
THE SKY JUST
TO DIE HERE
IN THE DIRT.



WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO **DO**? **TELL ME**. COME ON.

JUST THIS. NOTHING. JUST **BE** HERE.



AND WHO **YOU** HERE WITH, LEE?



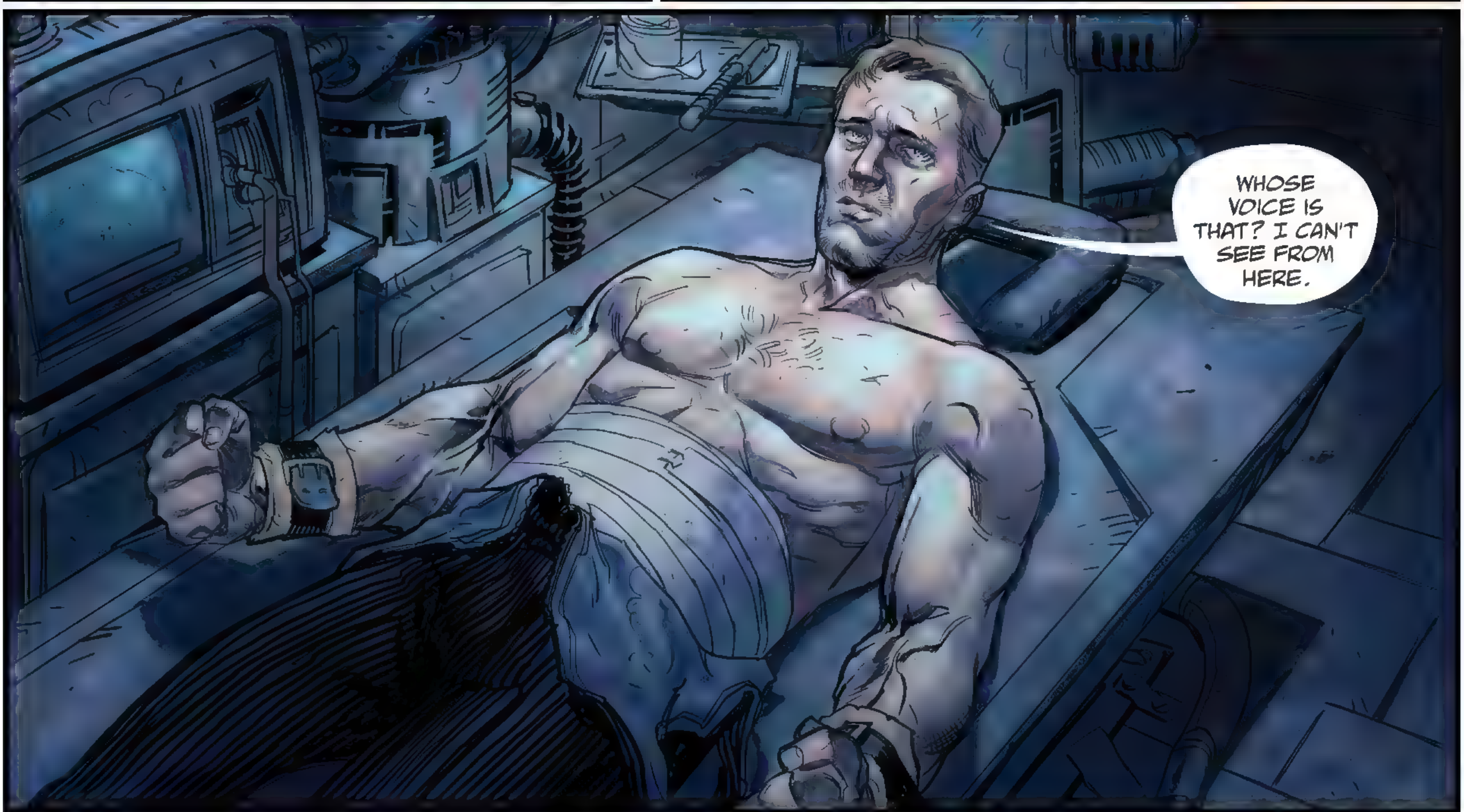
MEET A GIRL LIKES TO LOOK IN YOUR EYES, IT'LL FIX WHAT'S WRONG IN YOU.



UNTIL THE DAY THAT SHE LOOKS THROUGH YOU. LOOKING AT SOMETHING YOU CAN'T SEE.

I'M LOOKING AT YOU, JONAH. I'M HERE WITH **YOU**.

HELLO. **HELLO?**



WHOSE VOICE IS THAT? I CAN'T SEE FROM HERE.



I GOTTA
DEPRESSURIZE
THE RIG. MAYBE
I'LL SEE
YOU.



YOU'RE
SHOT, DO
YOU REMEMBER?
CAN YOU UNDER-
STAND ME?

I
REMEMBER.
I REMEMBER
THAT.



WHY'M I
RESTRAINED?



I DON'T
KNOW **WHY**
YOU GOT
SHOT.

MAYBE
IT'S MORE
THAN JUST
BAD LUCK.



"I NEVER
MET HIM.

"HE NEVER
SPOKE A WORD THAT
I COULD HEAR.



"BUT WHAT
HE DID TO
ME, I HAD IT
COMING."



ANOTHER
DARK CLOUD IN BOOTS.
POPPIN' UP LIKE WEEDS
THESE DAYS.



HOW
LONG WAS I
OUT?

COUPLE
DAYS. LONG
ENOUGH I
WOULDN'T BET ON
YOU TO ASK. TOO
LONG TO COME
BACK.



OR LONG
ENOUGH TO
MAKE ME
WRONG, I
GUESS.

WHO
FIXED ME
UP? THERE A
DOCTOR
HERE?



THERE'S
ME.



THAT BADGE SAYS
YOU'RE SOME KINDA
MARSHAL.



LAW HERE'S
A RELATIVE
CONCEPT.

BUT I
GOT TWO
HANDS.

QUESTIONS
ARE IN HER
EYES, BUT
SHE DOESN'T
ASK.

MAYBE SHE
DOESN'T
TRUST HOW
I'D ANSWER.

I GOT
ROUNDS AND
THEN I NEED TO
EAT. IN A FEW
HOURS I'LL
BE BACK TO SEE
IF YOU'RE STILL
WITH US.

TOMORROW
WE'LL START
TO REHABILITATE.
GET YOU ON THE
WAY TO WALKING
AGAIN.



WERE YOU
THIS WAY
BEFORE YOU
WERE SHOT? OR
DID YOU KNOCK
YOUR HEAD ON
THE WAY
DOWN?



TOMORROW'S
NO GOOD.
I'M LATE
ALREADY.



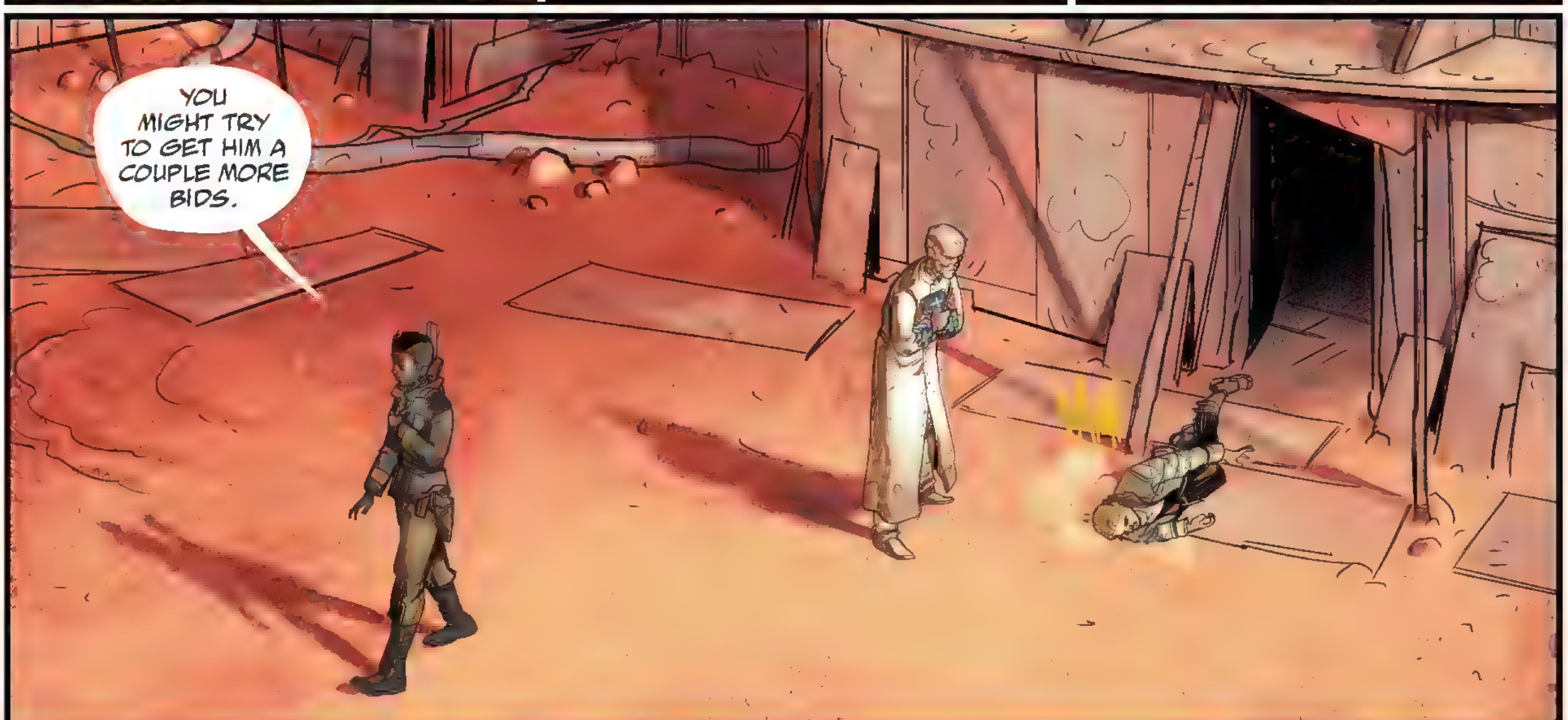
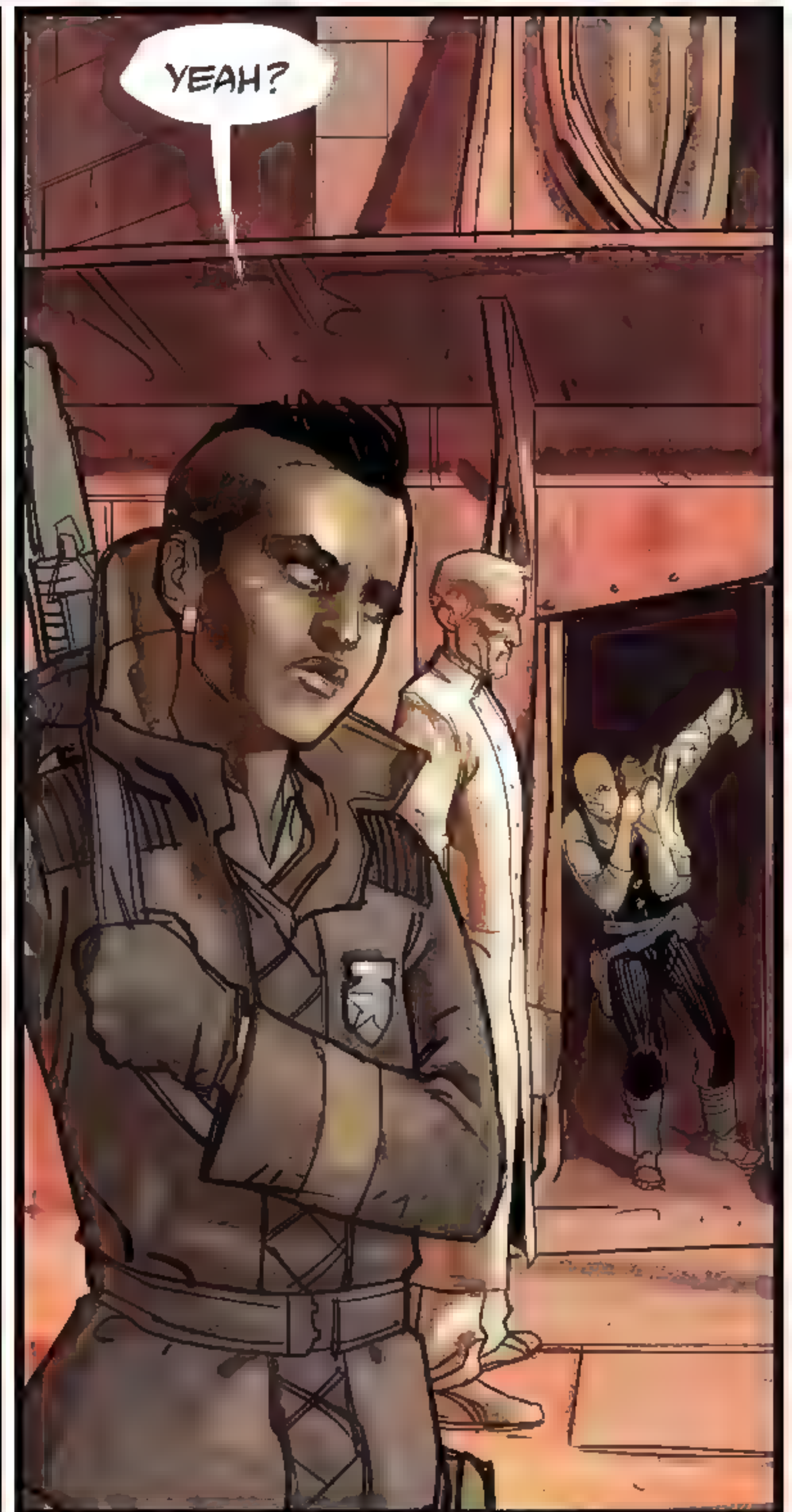
**HARDHEADED,
TOO. YOU'LL FIT IN
PERFECT.**

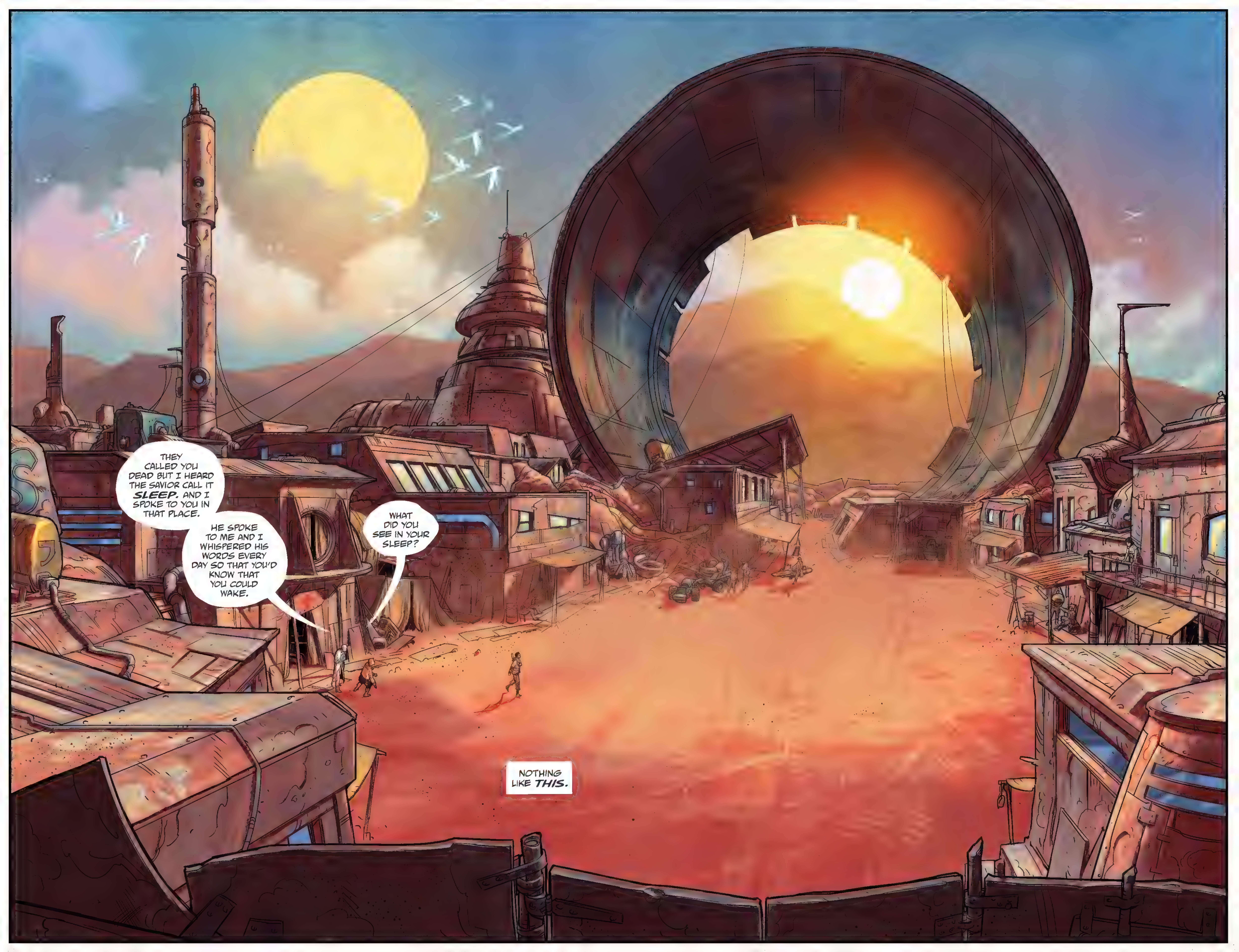
NO I
WON'T.



WHAT
YOU HAD **ON**
YOU WHEN THEY
BROUGHT YOU IN,
IT'S IN THAT
BOX.

I HAD
A GUN.



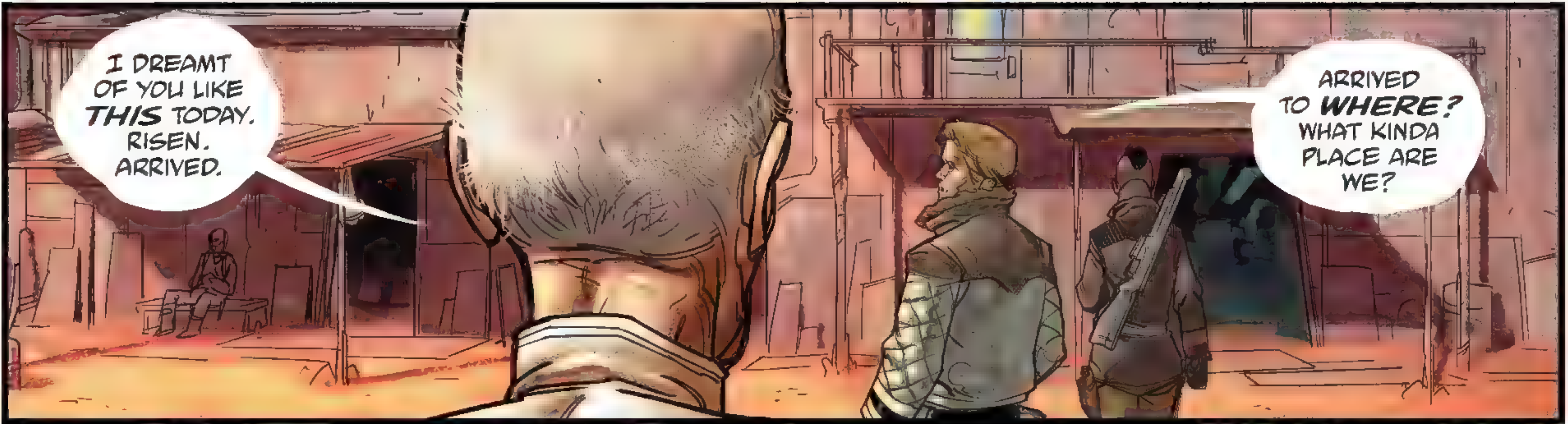


THEY
CALLED YOU
DEAD BUT I HEARD
THE SAVOR CALL IT
SLEEP. AND I
SPOKE TO YOU IN
THAT PLACE.

HE SPOKE
TO ME AND I
WHISPERED HIS
WORDS EVERY
DAY SO THAT YOU'D
KNOW THAT
YOU COULD
WAKE.

WHAT
DID YOU
SEE IN YOUR
SLEEP?

NOTHING
LIKE **THIS.**



I DREAMT
OF YOU LIKE
THIS TODAY.
RISEN.
ARRIVED.

ARRIVED
TO **WHERE?**
WHAT KINDA
PLACE ARE
WE?



THEY CALL IT
GHOST TOWN. WHAT
KINDA PLACE, I GUESS
WE'RE WORKING AT.
WHAT KINDA PLACE
IT'LL **BE**.



WHERE CAN
I GET MY HEAD
RIGHT?

MISTER?

IS THERE
A **BAR?**



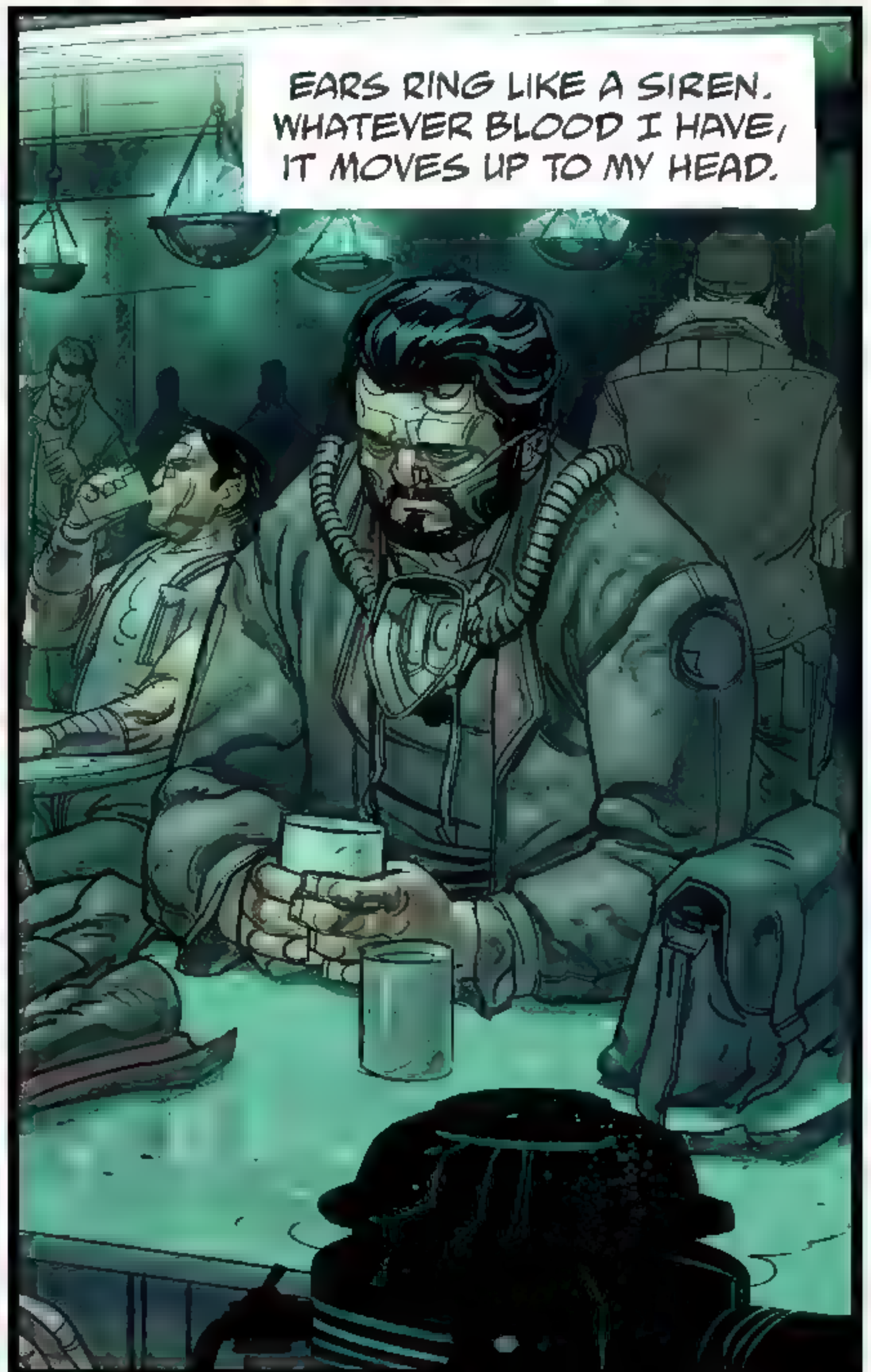
TAKE HIM TO IT. TELL
BIG TO LET HIM HAVE
HIS GUN OUT OF
THE SAFE.

I'VE GOT
A LOT TO DO
TODAY.

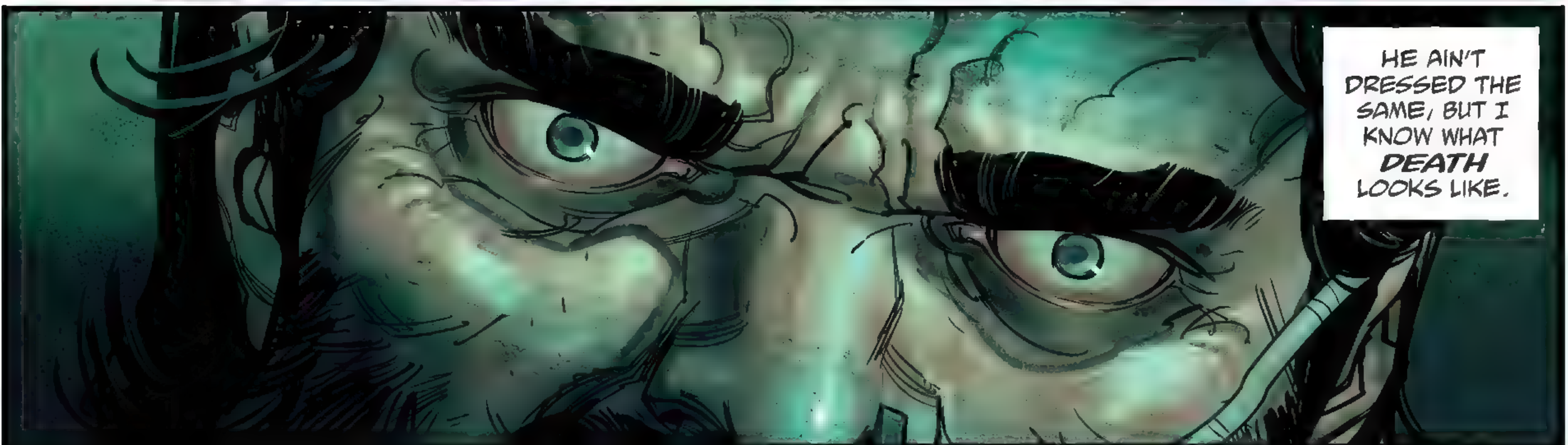


WHAT DO
THEY TAKE
HERE FOR
MONEY?

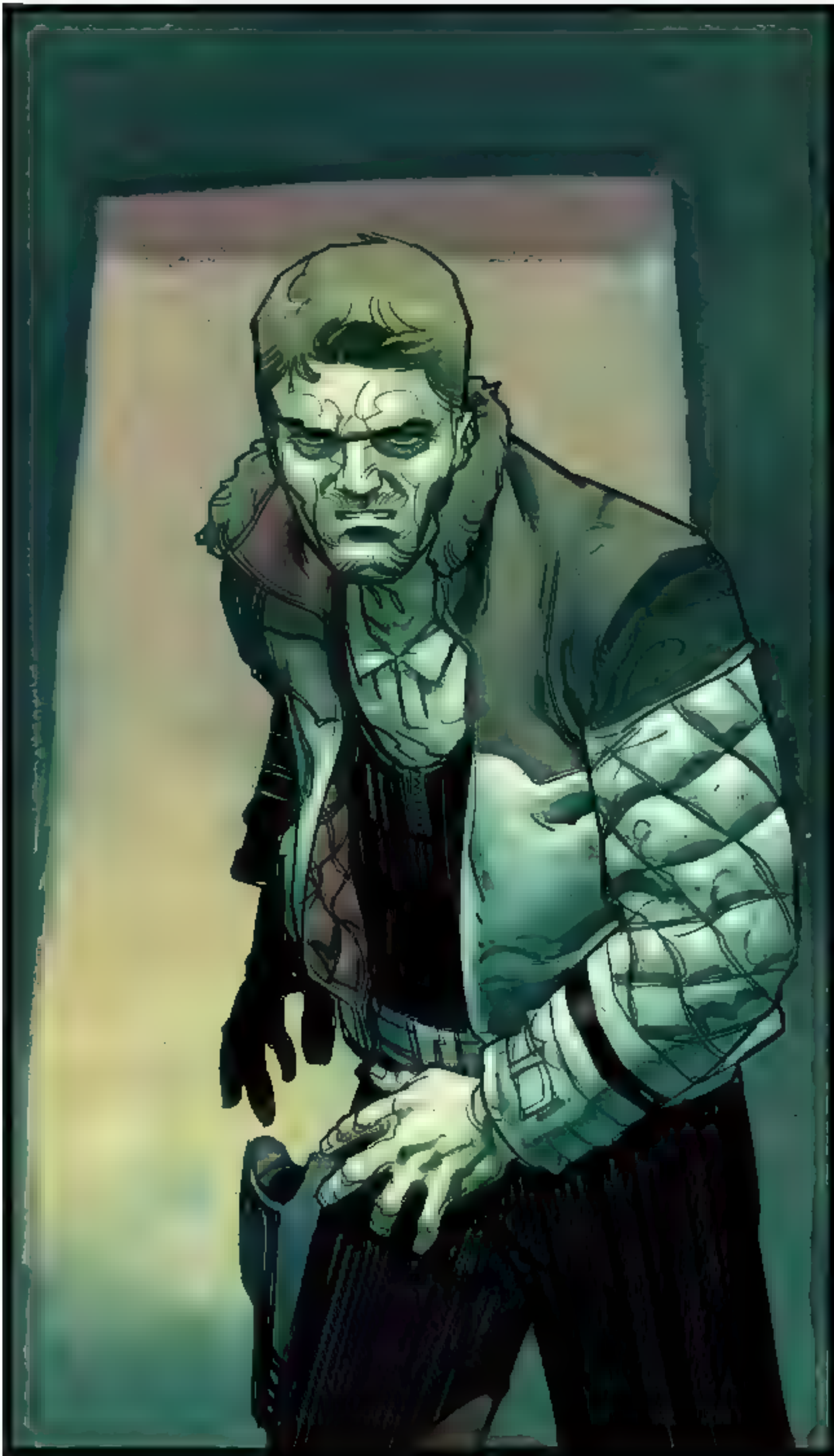
ALLOW
ME TO
ARRANGE
IT.



EARS RING LIKE A SIREN.
WHATEVER BLOOD I HAVE,
IT MOVES UP TO MY HEAD.



HE AIN'T
DRESSED THE
SAME, BUT I
KNOW WHAT
DEATH
LOOKS LIKE.









EVERY NEXT
MOVE IN MY
HEAD IS A
BAD ONE.



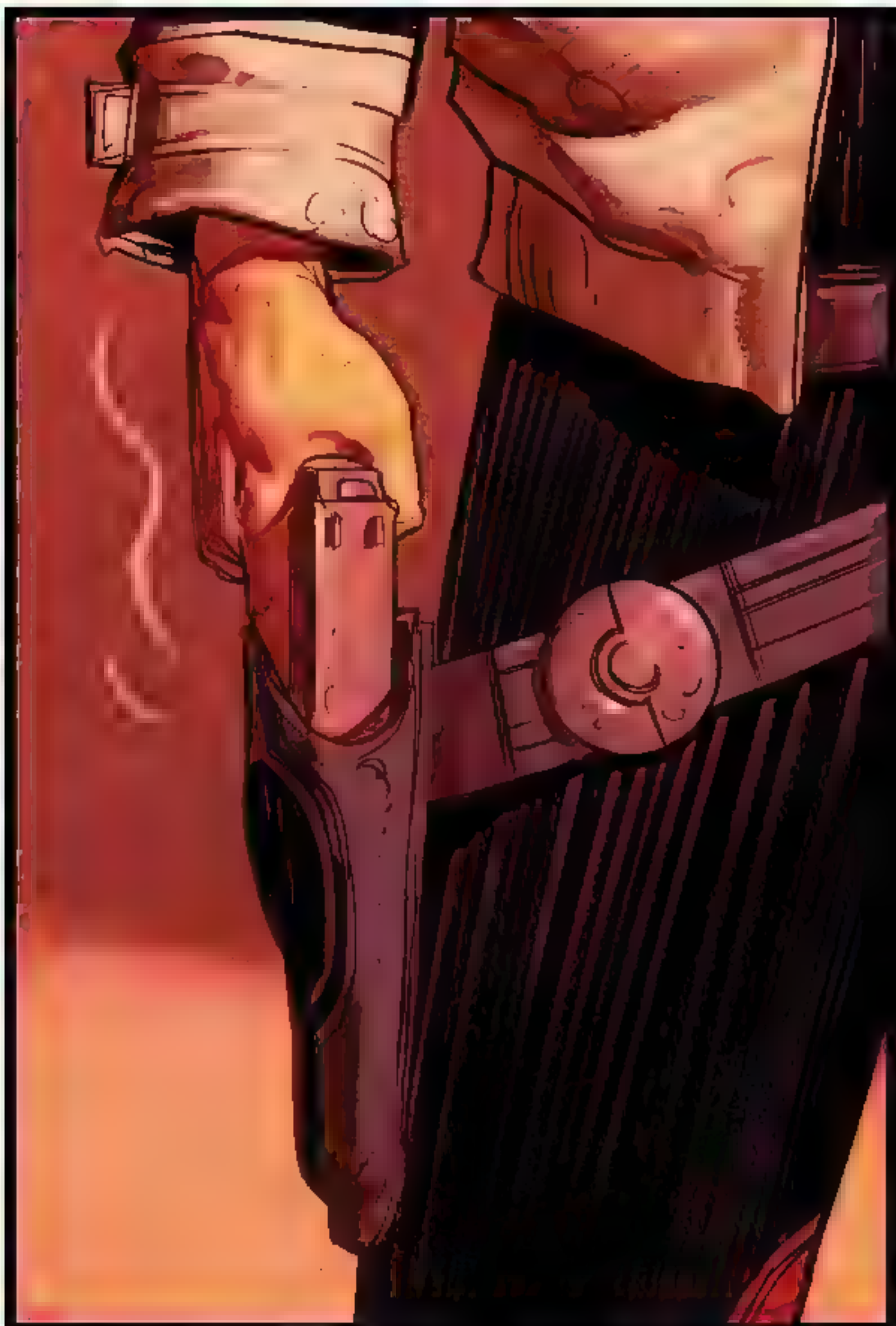
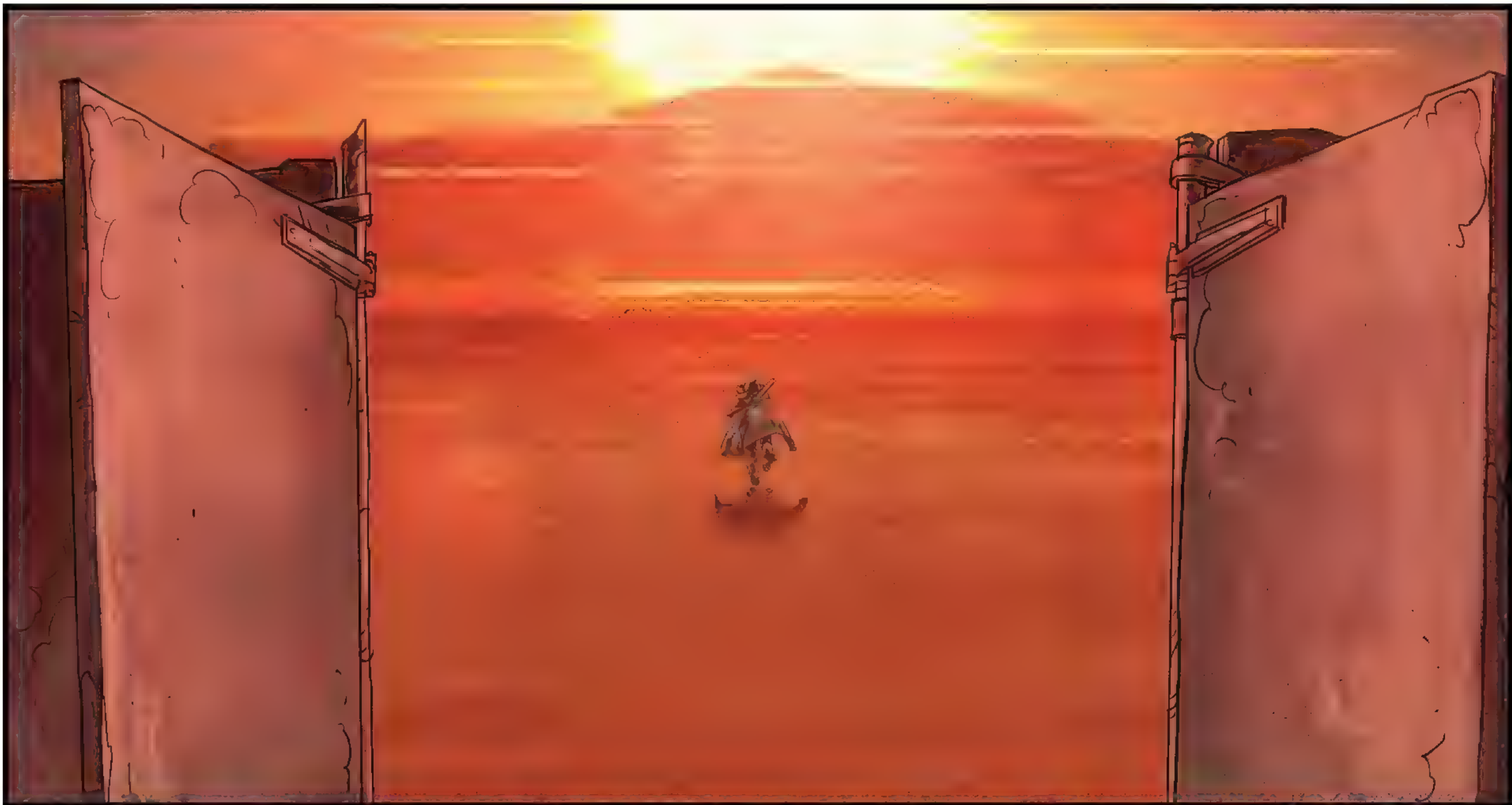
I SHOULDN'T
BE HERE.



BUT
NONE
AS BAD
AS
WHAT I
FINALLY
DO.



BEEN HALF-
DROWNED AND
BURNT UP,
CRASHED AND
THEN SHOT IN
THIS PLACE...





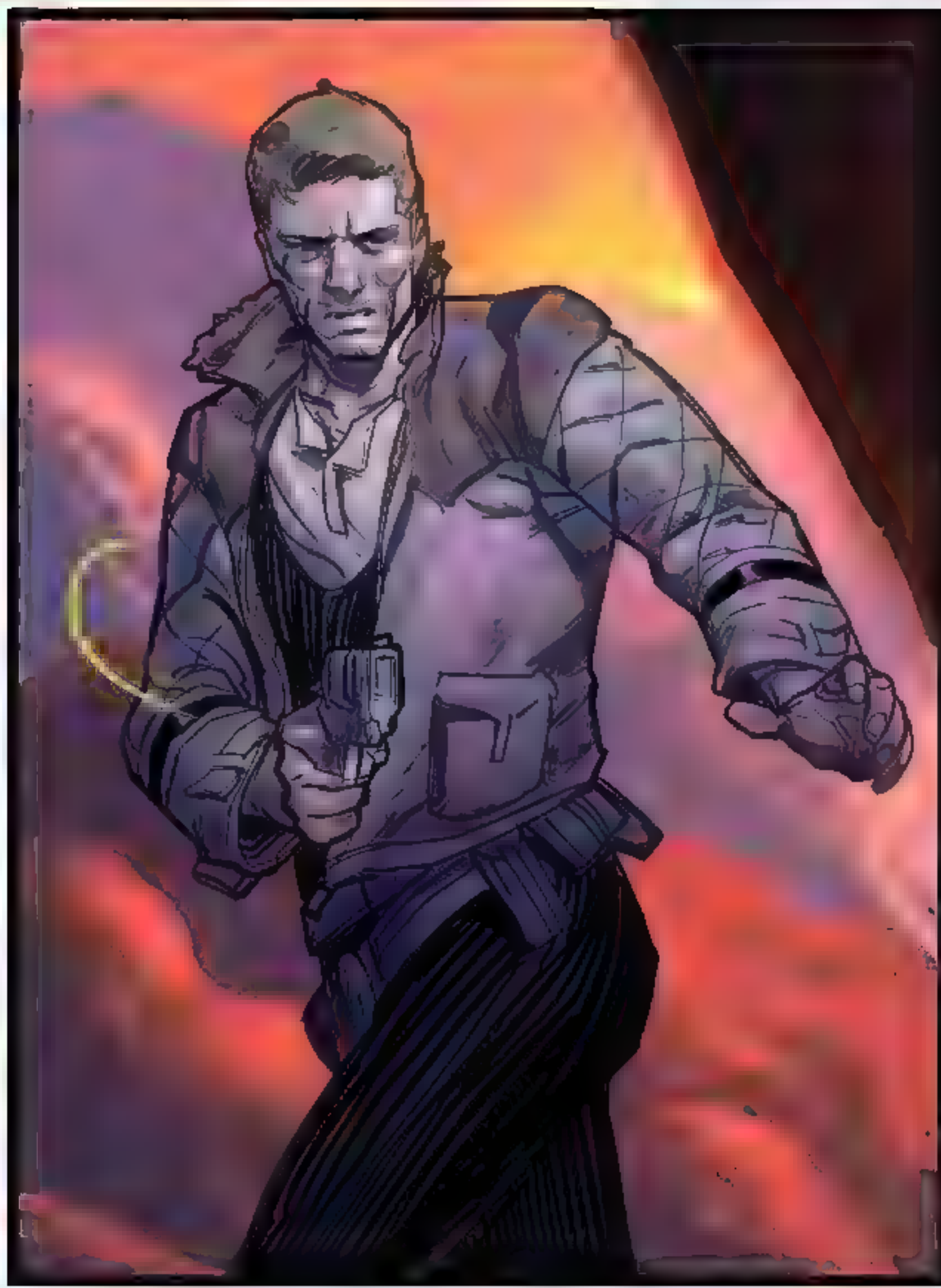
THE HOURS ARE
LIKE DAYS. I LOSE
THE SHOOTER AND
THE SUN AND IT
GETS COLD FAST.

VANISHED
INTO THE
AIR OR A
HUNDRED
CAVES.



A HUNDRED
PLACES TO
HIDE. HUNDRED
PLACES TO LINE
UP A SHOT.

WHAT'S
OUT HERE
THE WAY YOU
SEE IT?



SOME KINDA
RECKONING?



NOT
AGAINST
SOMEONE
ELSE.

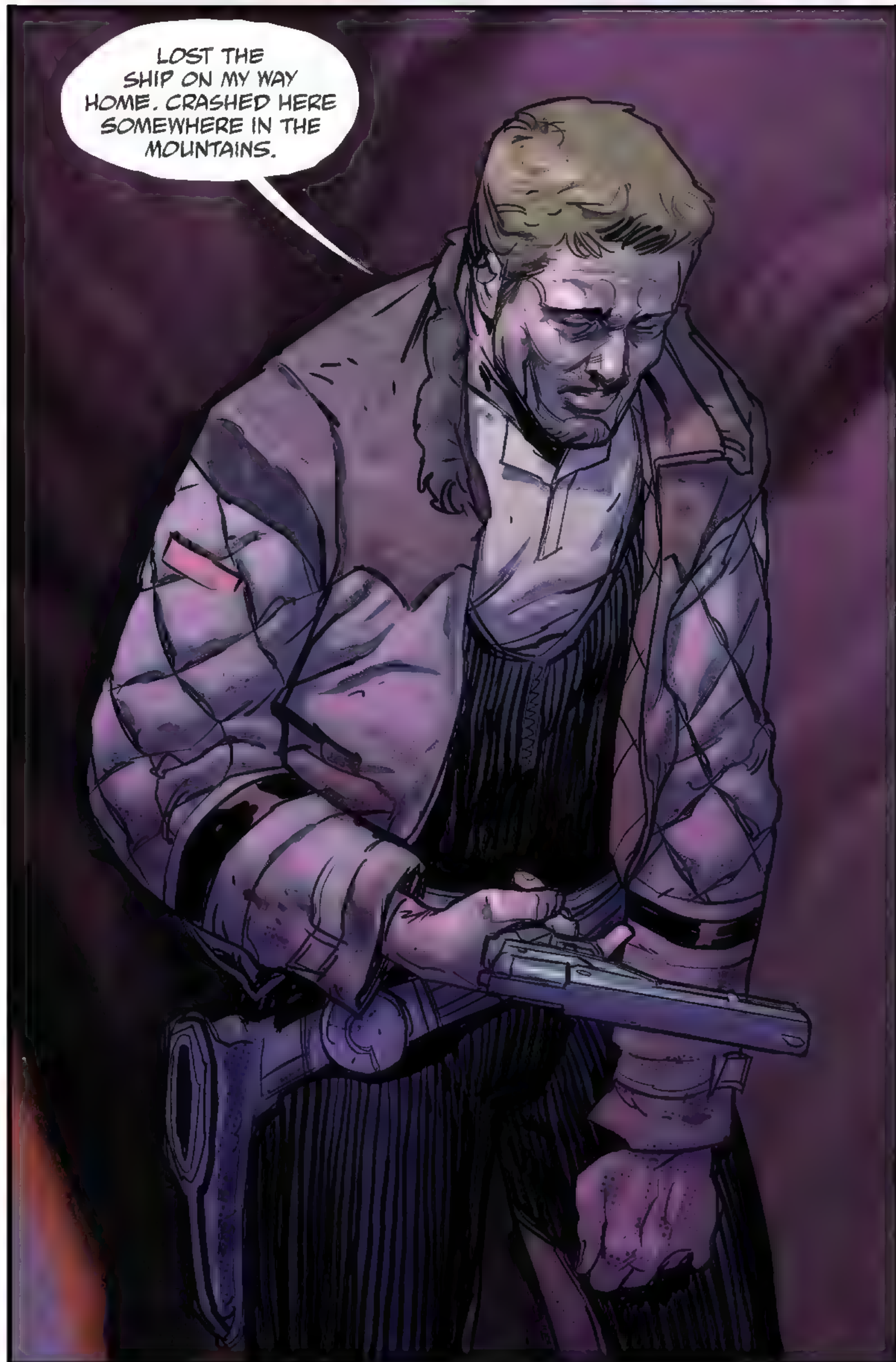
YOU
SAID YOU
DESERVED
WHAT YOU
GOT.

NOW YOU'RE
POINTING A GUN
YOU KNOW WON'T
SHOOT.

YOU GET
SOMETHING
SO WRONG YOU'D
PAY IT BACK
WITH YOUR OWN
BREATH?

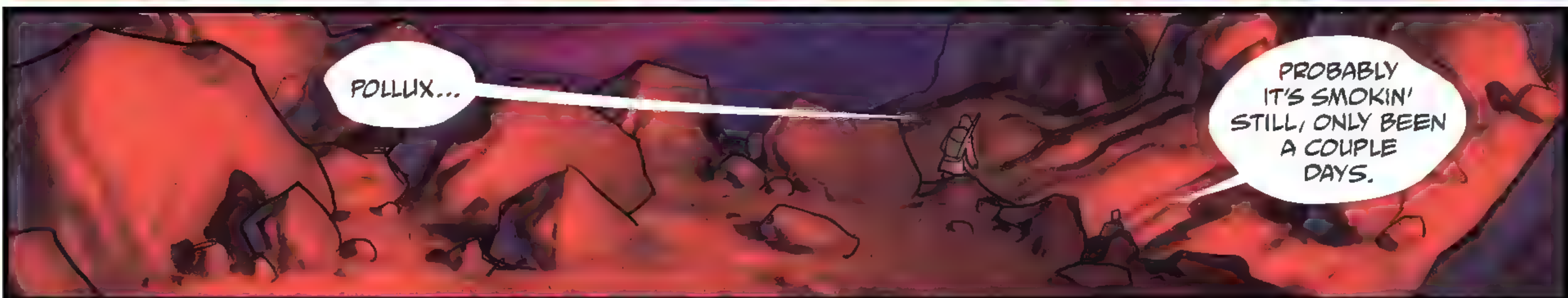


WHERE DID
YOU COME FROM?
THERE HASN'T BEEN
A SHIP IN AGES. WERE
YOU JUST BORN HERE,
FULL GROWN AND
GUTSHOT?



LOST THE
SHIP ON MY WAY
HOME. CRASHED HERE
SOMEWHERE IN THE
MOUNTAINS.







...THAT SHIP
CRASHED HERE
CLOSE TO A
YEAR AGO.



CHAPTER 2
THROUGH THE NIGHT

N
20
17

THAT FEELIN' AGAIN.
LIKE IN ALMOST EVERY MEMORY.

SO FAINT IT MIGHT
NOT EVEN REALLY BE.

LIKE A SONG BUT
THERE'S NO MUSIC.

SOFT BUT ENDLESS. BACK AND FORWARD
THROUGH TIME, THROUGH THE NIGHT.

I FELL
OUT OF
THE SKY.



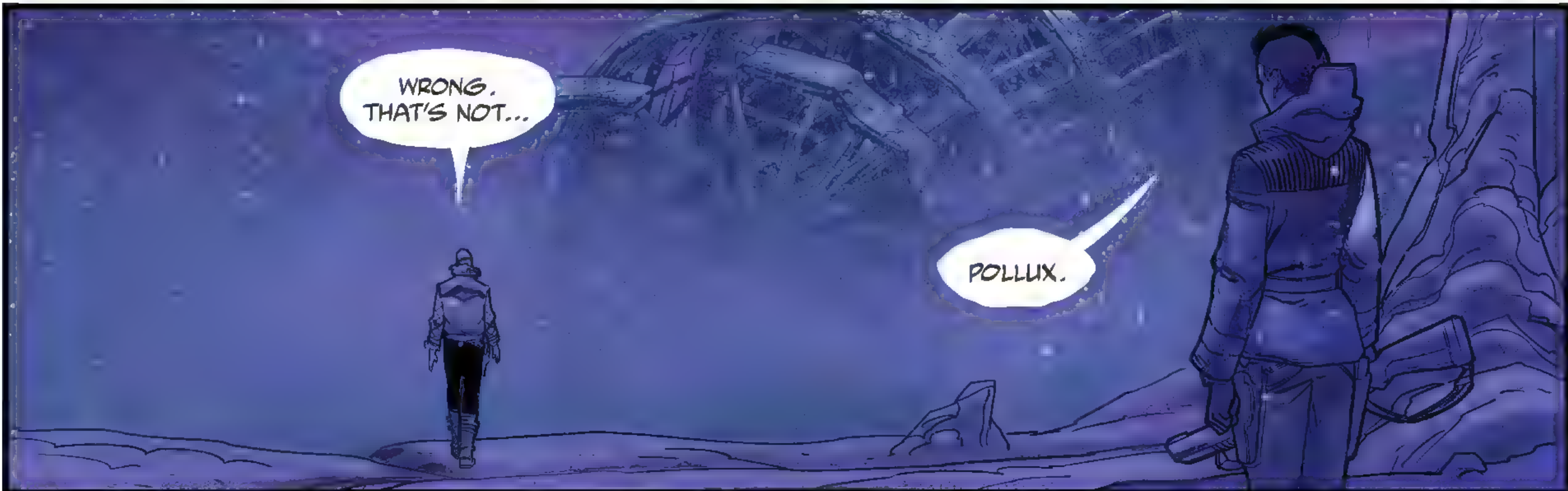
AND THEN
THE SKY FELL
AFTER ME.

HOW
LONG WAS
I ON THAT
BED?

POLLUX...

THREE
DAYS. YOU
WERE OUT
THREE
DAYS.





WRONG.
THAT'S NOT...

POLLUX.



MUST'A BEEN
SOMEWHERE ELSE
BEFORE YOU SAW TO
ME. WHO KNOWS
HOW LONG.

POLLUX!
YOU WERE
GUTSHOT. EVEN
AN HOUR MORE
YOU'D'VE BLED
OUT AND BEEN
GONE.



THAT'S NOT
YOUR SHIP. AND
THERE HASN'T
BEEN ANOTHER
SINCE THAT ONE.
NOT A LANDING,
NOT EVEN A
BEACON. NOT A
SOUND OUT OF
THAT SKY.



I KNOW
THAT SHIP LIKE
I KNOW ANYTHING.
THAT SHIP'S MY
WHOLE LI--



KZIK

DON'T KNOW
IF THEY'RE
HUMAN, BUT
I KNOW WHAT
THEY ARE.



SCAVENGERS!
RUN TOWARDS
THE RIDGE!





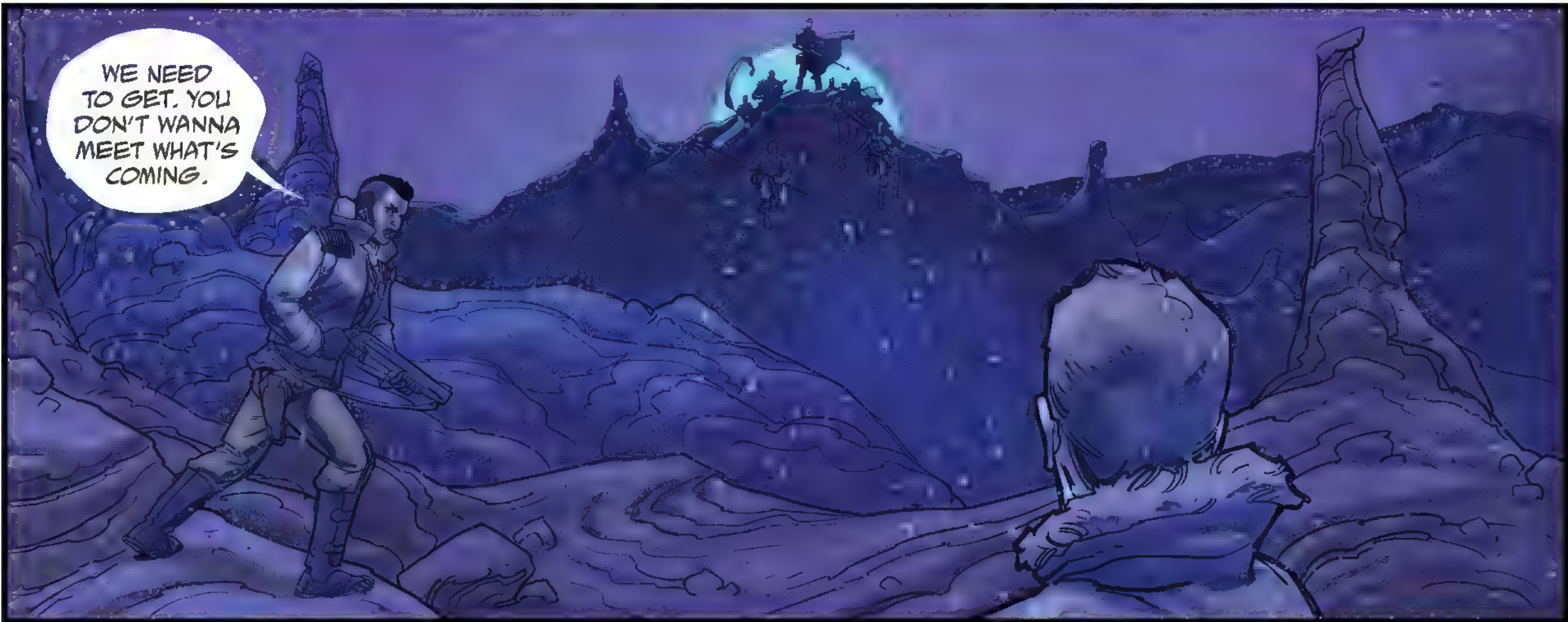
COME
TO PICK
THE BONES
OF WHAT
MEMORIES
ARE LEFT.



SHOT
HITS HIM
RIGHT,
BUT HE
JUST
STARES.



DOESN'T
SOUND LIKE
WORDS, BUT
THEY LISTEN.



WE NEED
TO GET. YOU
DON'T WANNA
MEET WHAT'S
COMING.



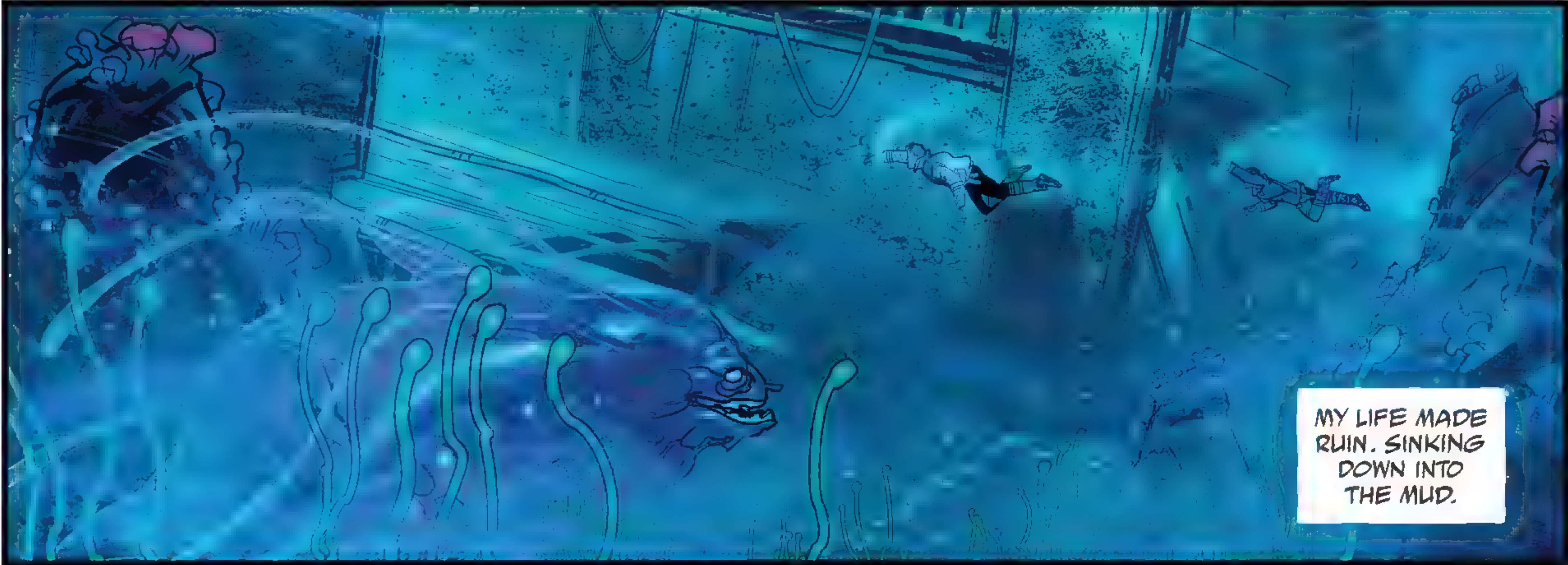
THIS SOUP.
WHAT *IS*
IT?

SOME
OF IT'S
WATER. THE
REST ISN'T
ANYTHING
GOOD.



MY SHIP. IT
HAS TO BE.





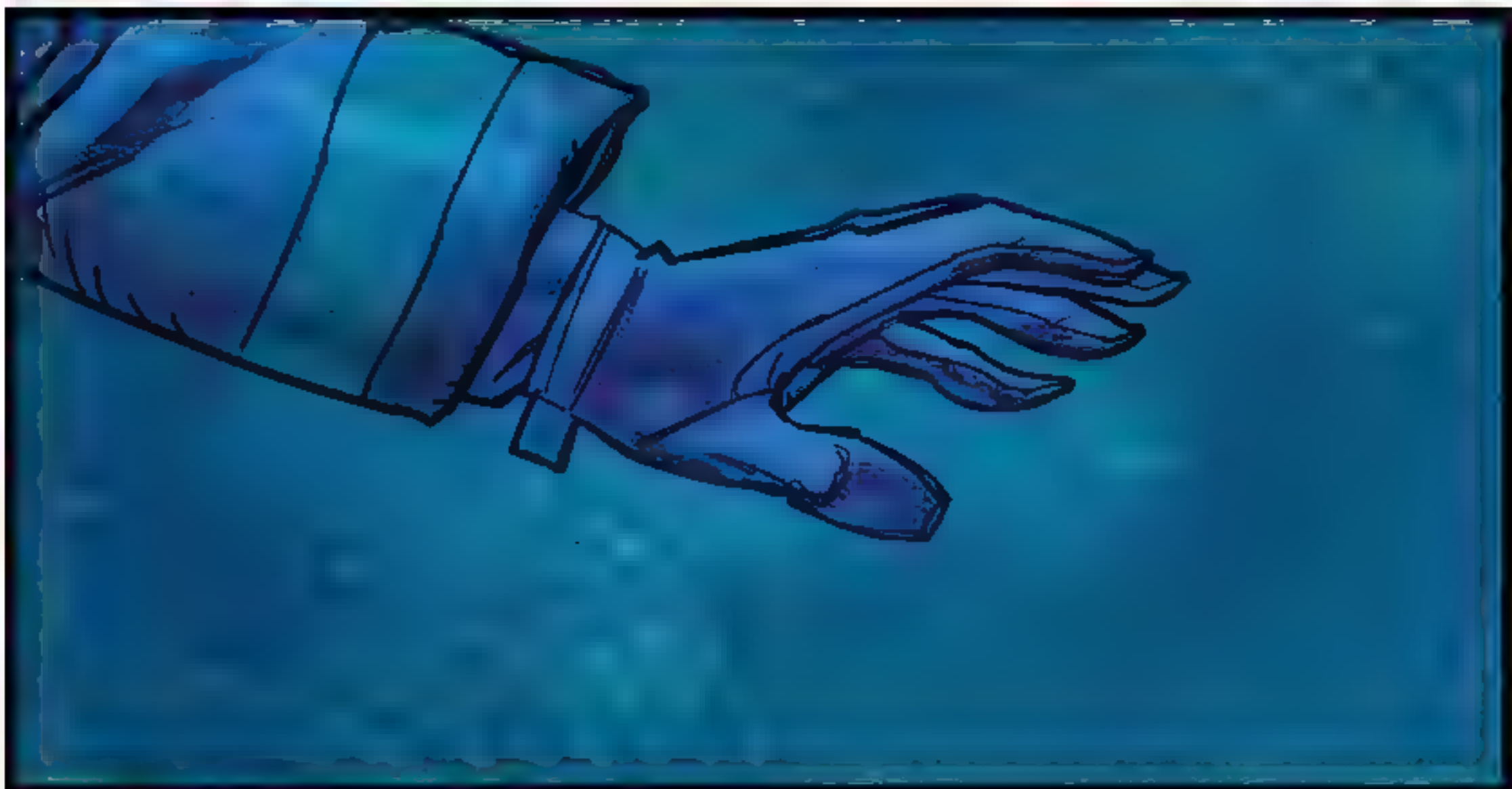
MY LIFE MADE
RUIN. SINKING
DOWN INTO
THE MUD.

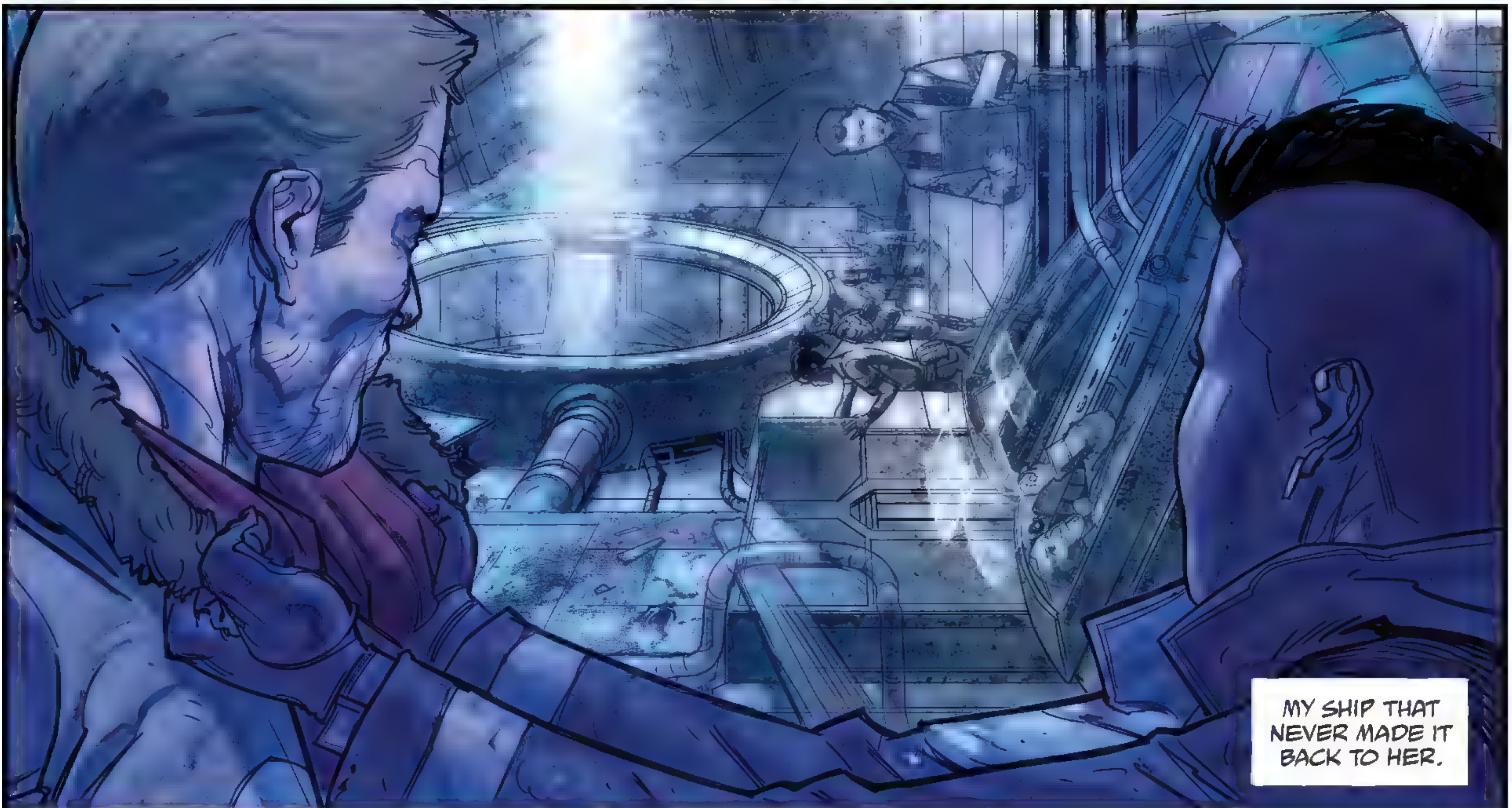


MY SHIP.



HALLOWED IN
IMPOSSIBLE
LIGHT.



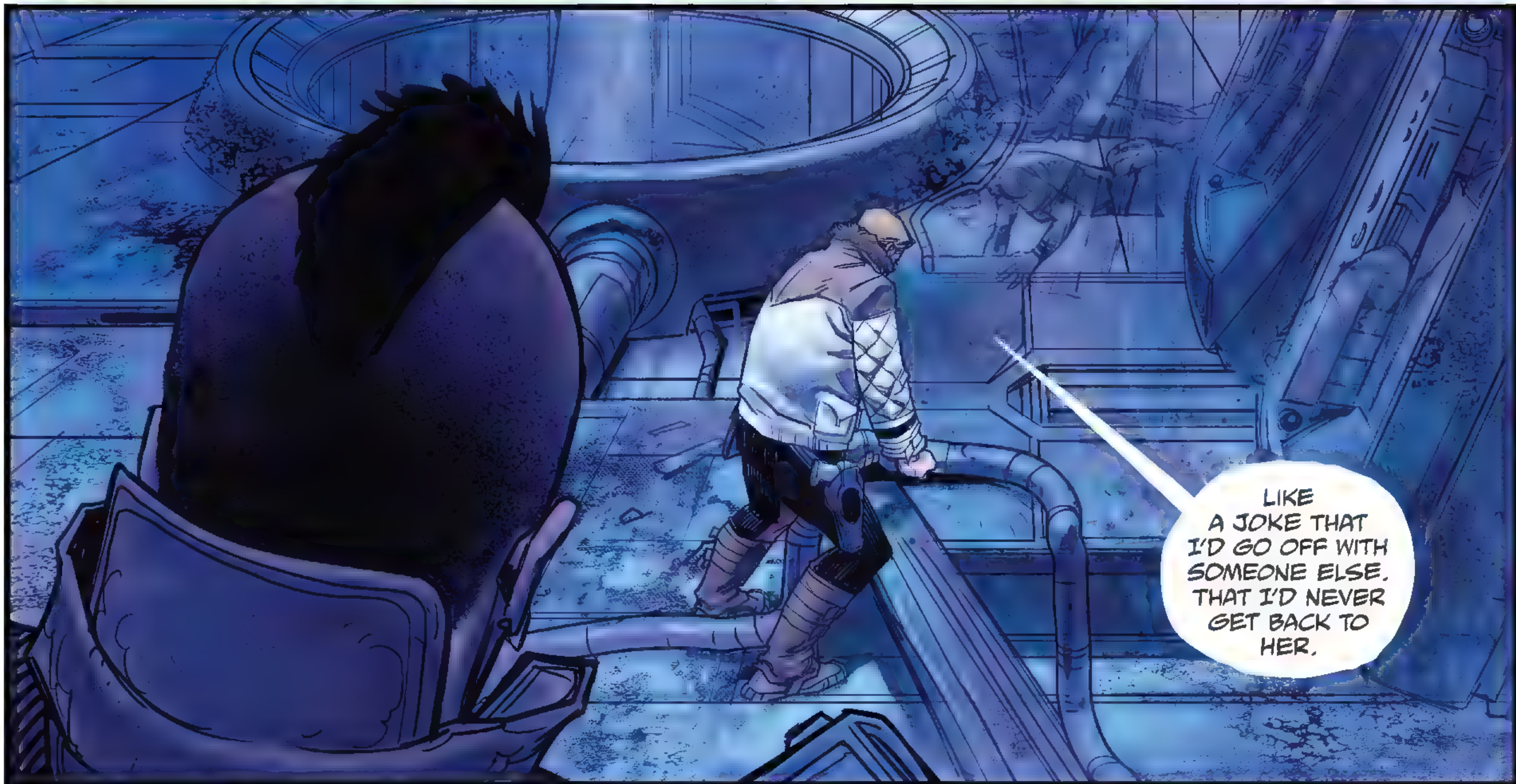




THEIR FACES
WRONG,
RUSTED OUT
LIKE THE
REST OF IT.



SHE USED
TO SAY SHE
WAS WAITING
ON ME TO
WANDER.



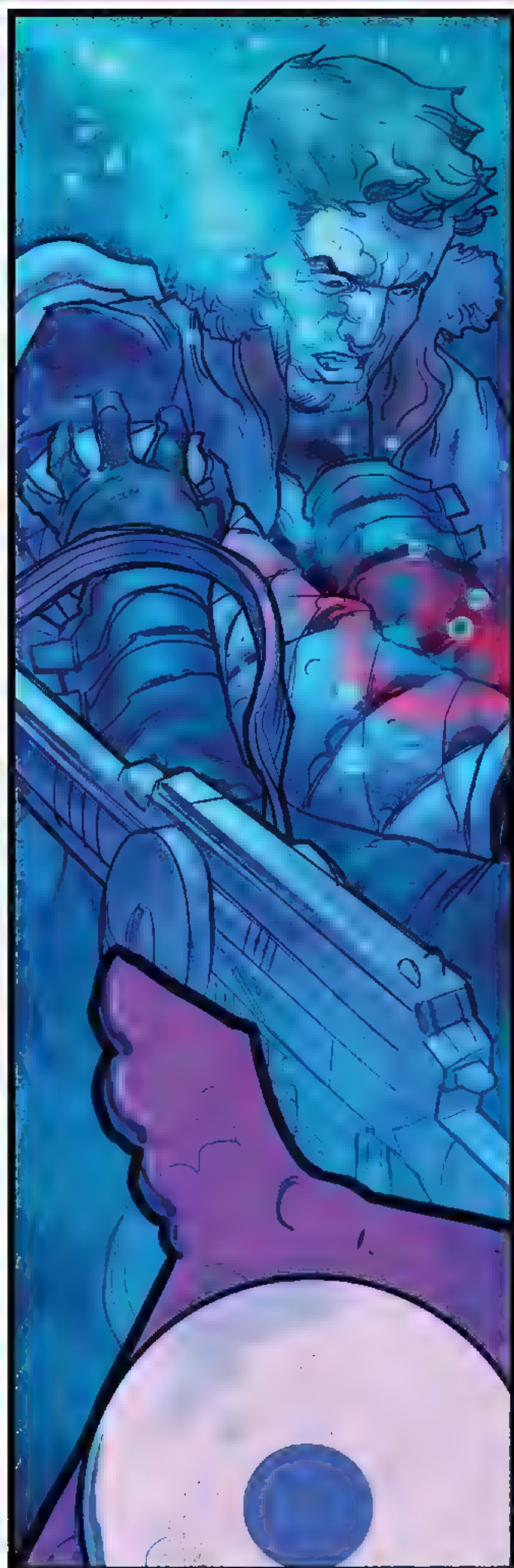
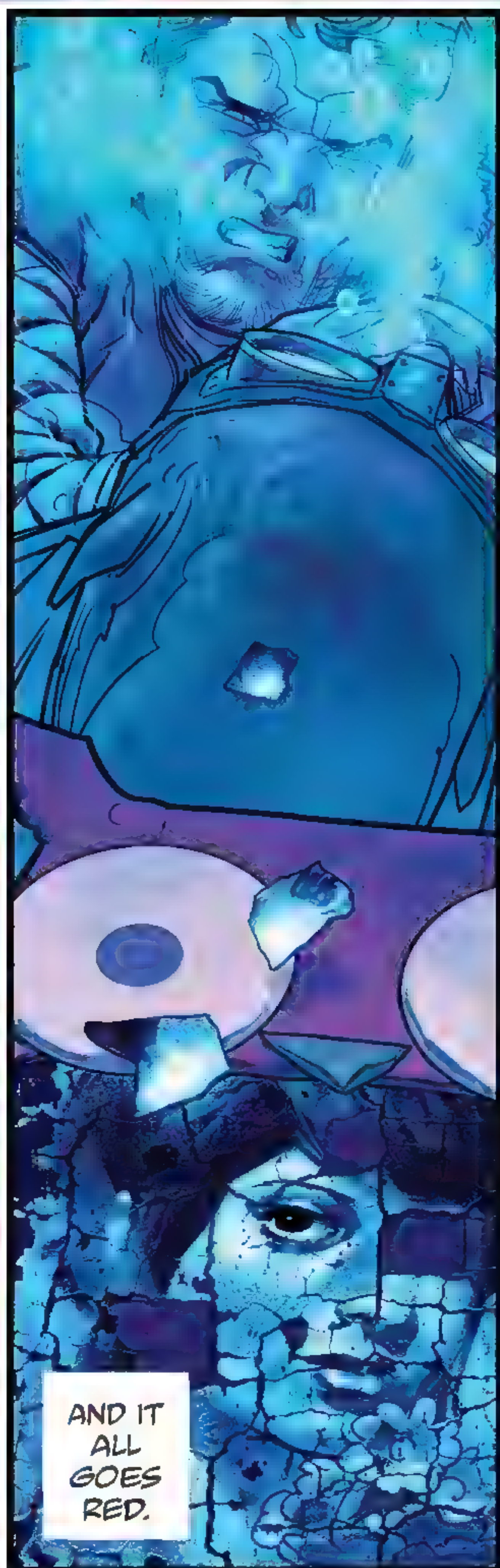
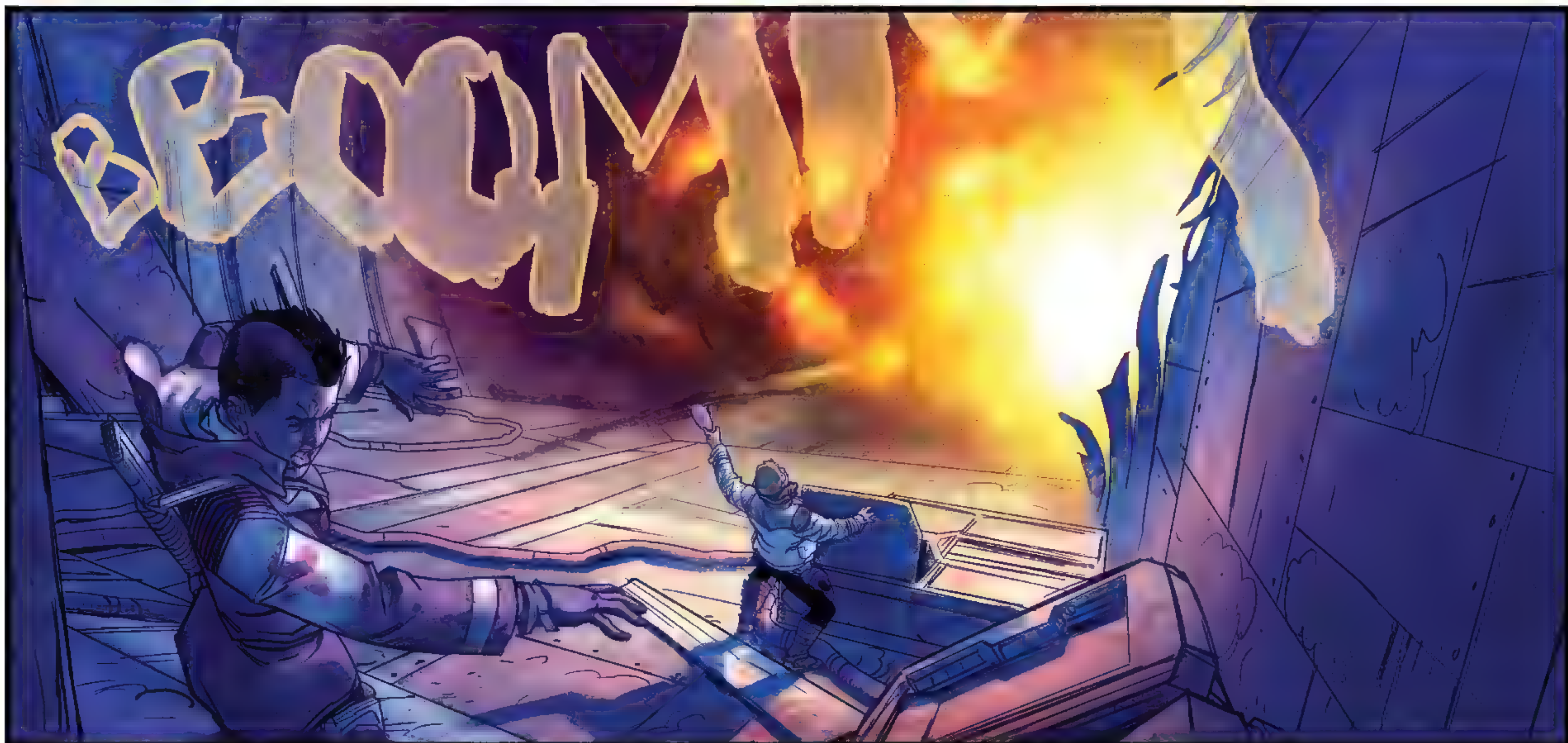
LIKE
A JOKE THAT
I'D GO OFF WITH
SOMEONE ELSE.
THAT I'D NEVER
GET BACK TO
HER.

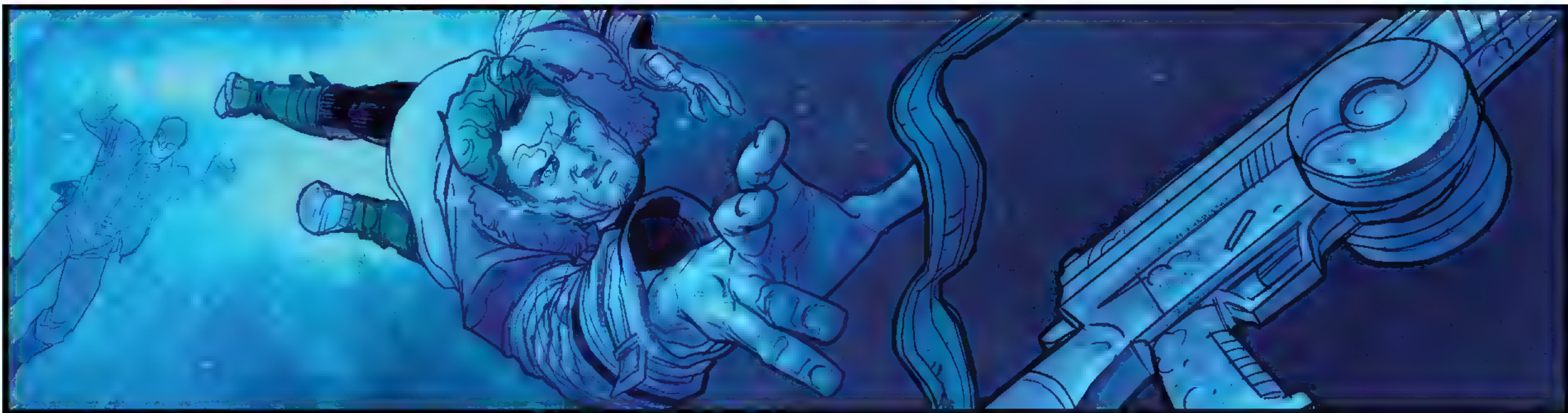


JUST THIS
ONE THING.
LET ME
HAVE THIS
ONE THING
LEFT.

POLLUX

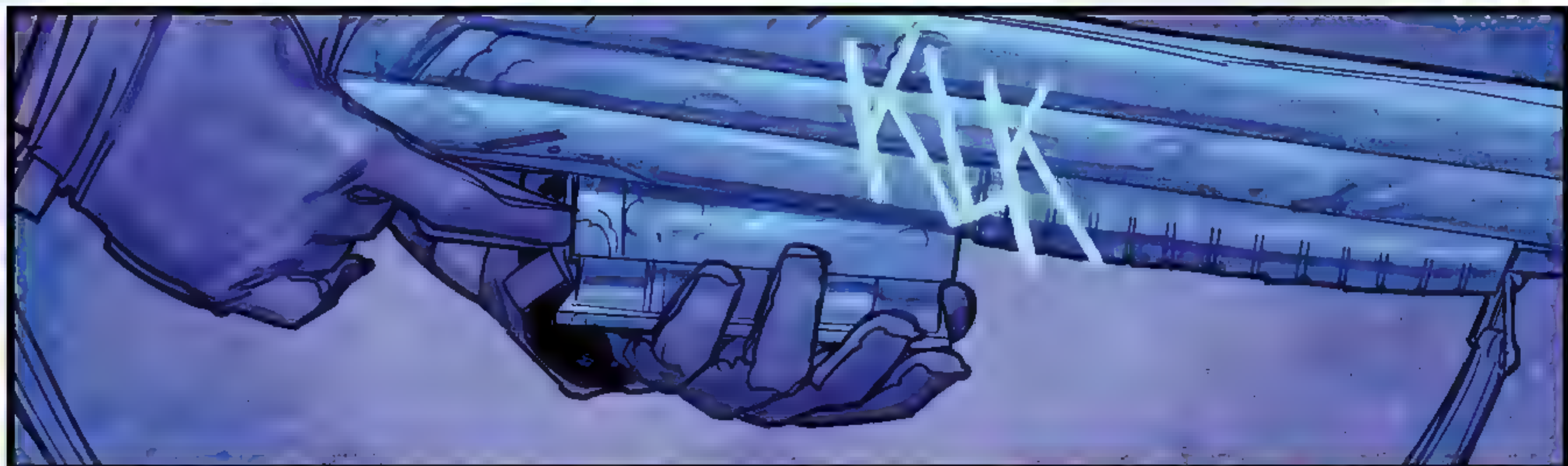






WE CAN LEAVE
IT LIKE THIS. TAKE WHAT
YOU CAME FOR AND WE
TURN AROUND AND ALL
GO HOME AGAIN.

FORGET
WHAT ALMOST
HAPPENED.



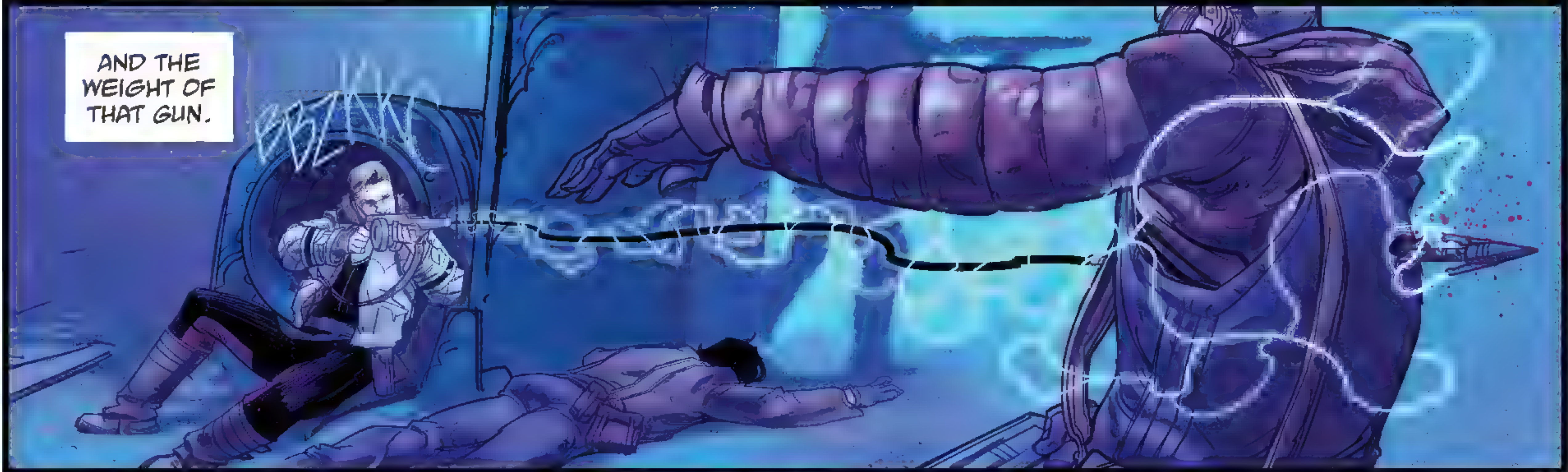
FINE.



WHATEVER'S
NEXT I DON'T
REMEMBER.



JUST ALL
THAT **RED**.



AND THE
WEIGHT OF
THAT GUN.





AND THEN
THE COLD.

WE
NEED TO
RUN.

I CAN'T,
I'M SORRY.
I WON'T
MAKE IT.



DO THOSE
CAVES CONNECT
INSIDE?

SOME OF
THEM DO. BUT
THEY KNOW THOSE
CAVES LIKE THEY
WERE BORN
IN THEM.



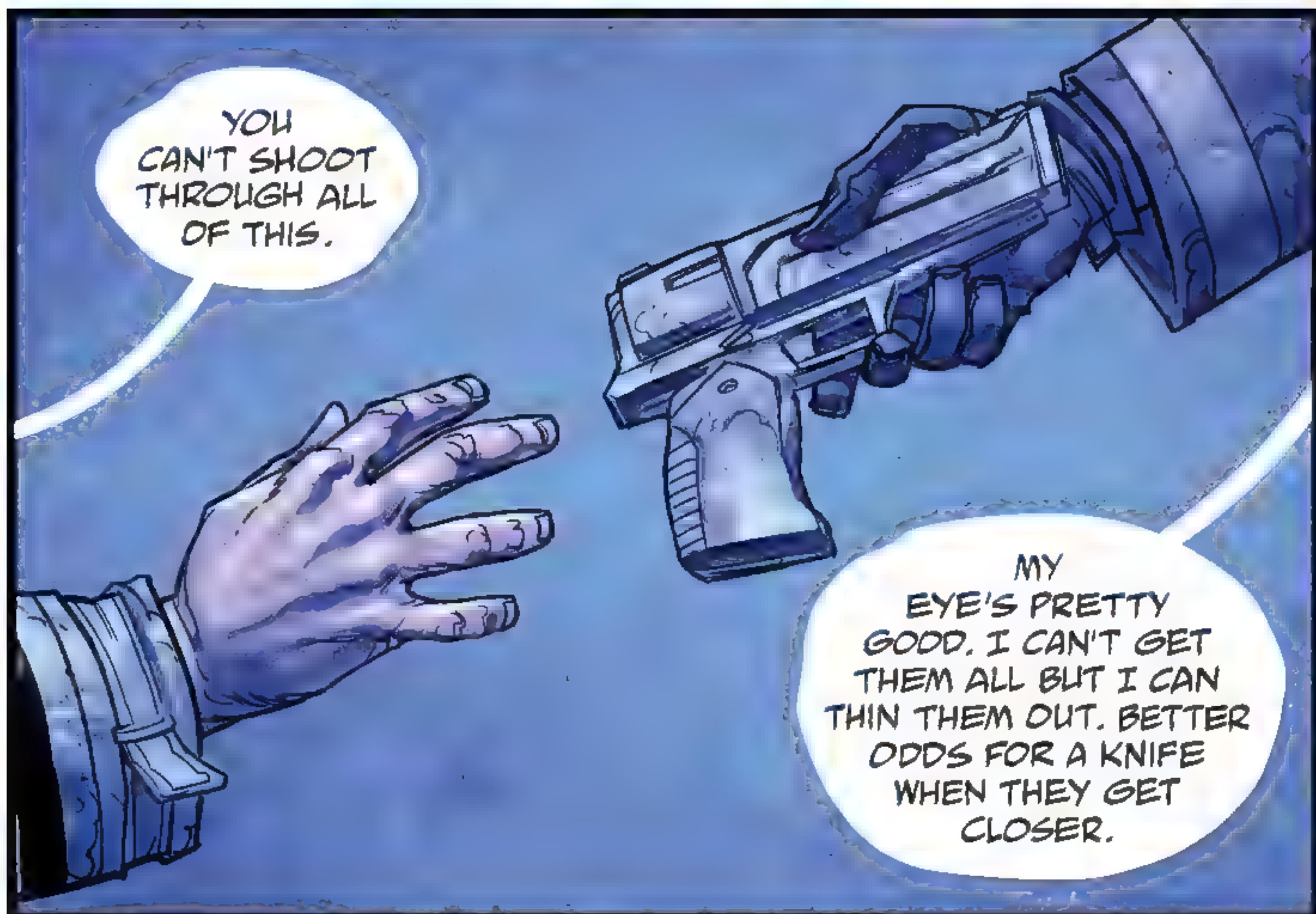
IF
WE'RE
OUT HERE
THEY CAN
PICK US
OFF.

WE
GO IN
THERE WE'LL
NEVER COME
BACK **OUT**
AGAIN.



MY
FAULT.
DON'T TAKE
THE FALL FOR
ME. LEAVE THE
RIFLE AND I'LL
GET THEM
OFF YOUR
BACK.

HOW MANY
TIMES I GOTTA
SAY IT? I **GAVE**
YOU THIS DAY, IT'S NOT
YOURS TO SPOIL. I'LL
SHOOT THROUGH
THAT HILL IF I
HAVE TO.



YOU
CAN'T SHOOT
THROUGH ALL
OF THIS.

MY
EYE'S PRETTY
GOOD. I CAN'T GET
THEM ALL BUT I CAN
THIN THEM OUT. BETTER
ODDS FOR A KNIFE
WHEN THEY GET
CLOSER.

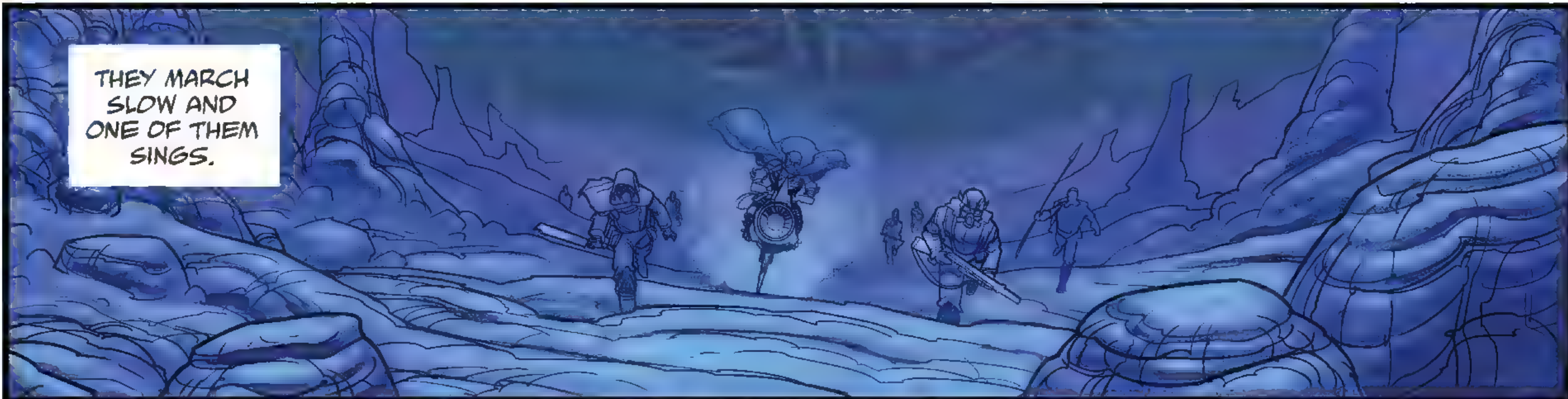




GET LOW
NOW. GET
READY.



I HEAR A
KIND OF HYMN
THROUGH ALL
THAT COLD.



THEY MARCH
SLOW AND
ONE OF THEM
SINGS.



AND
THE NIGHT
ANSWERS.



THE SKY EXPLODES
AND THE MUSIC STOPS.



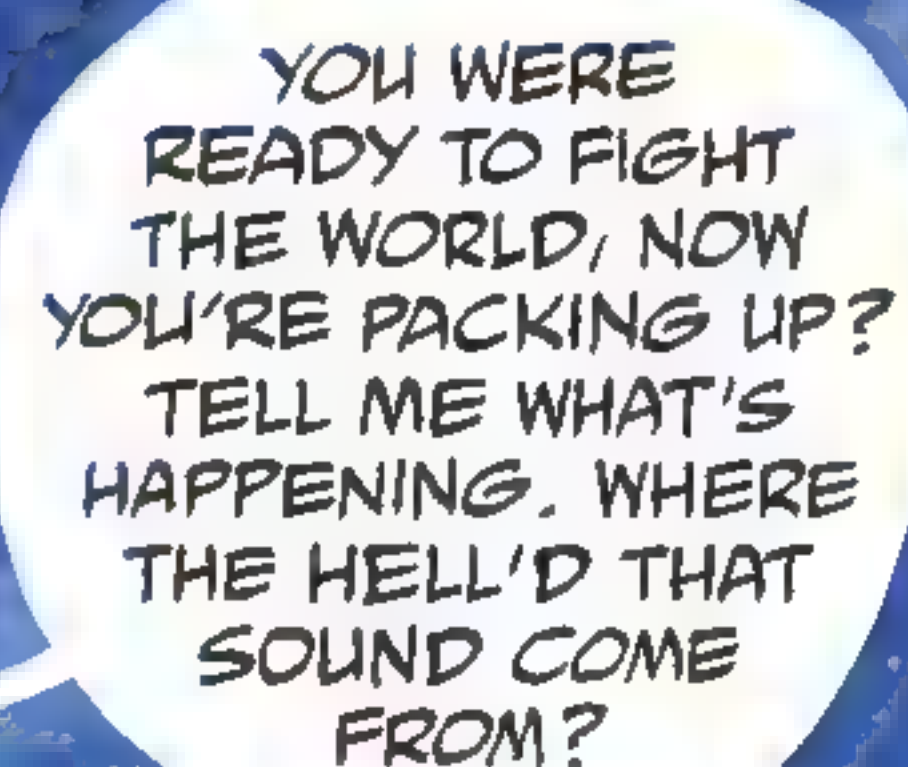
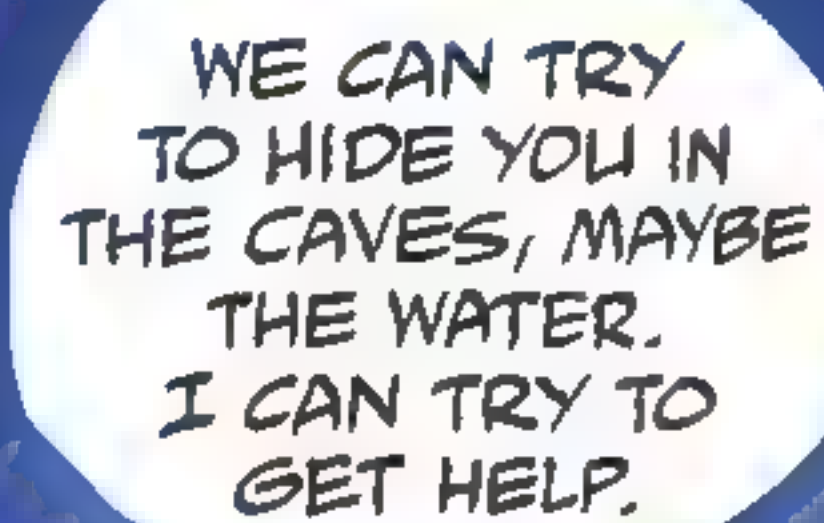
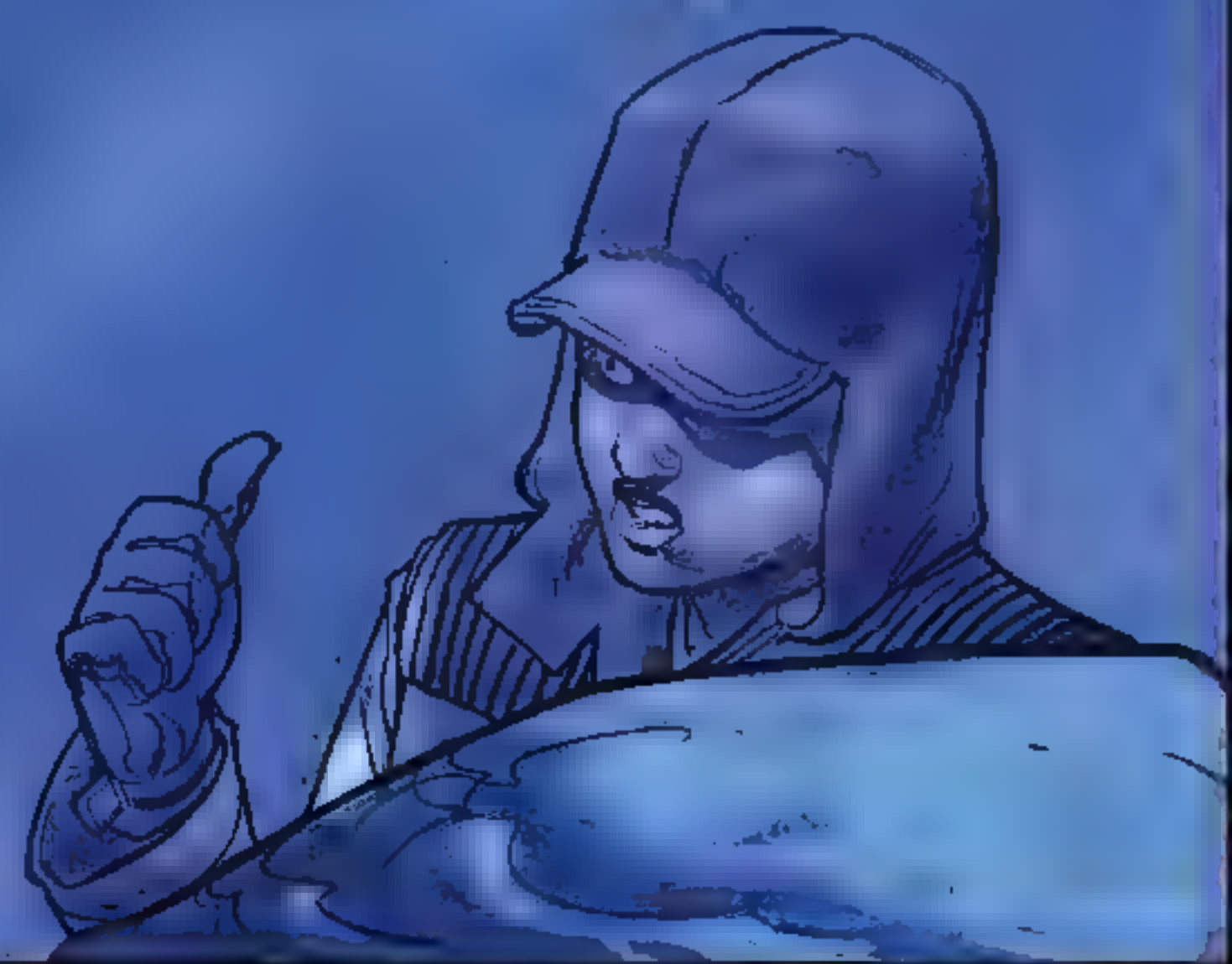
WE'RE
GOING TO
NEED A NEW
PLAN.



WHAT'D
WE JUST SEE?
THEY'RE SCARED OF
LIGHTNING?

NO. NOT THE
LIGHTNING.

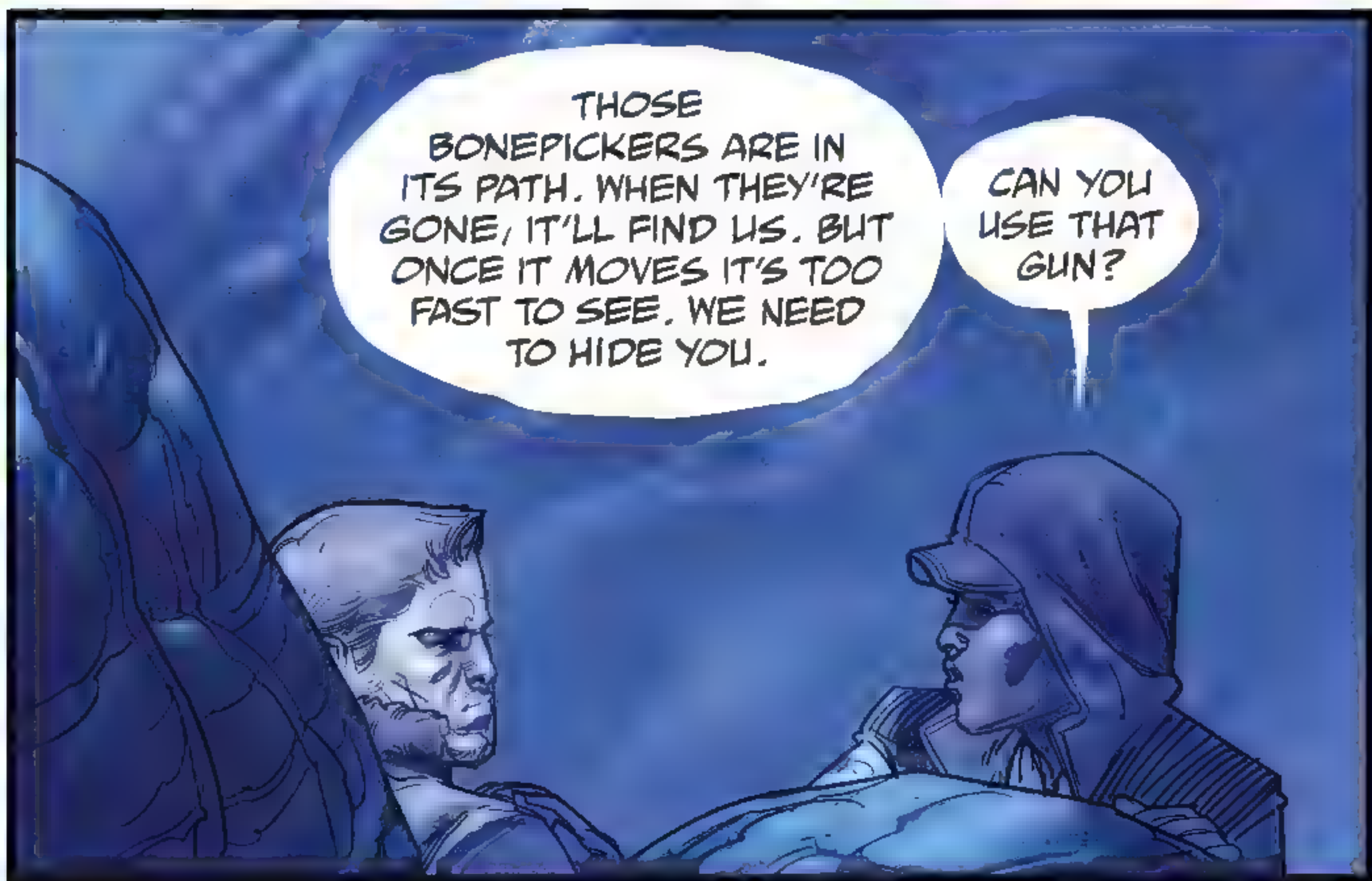






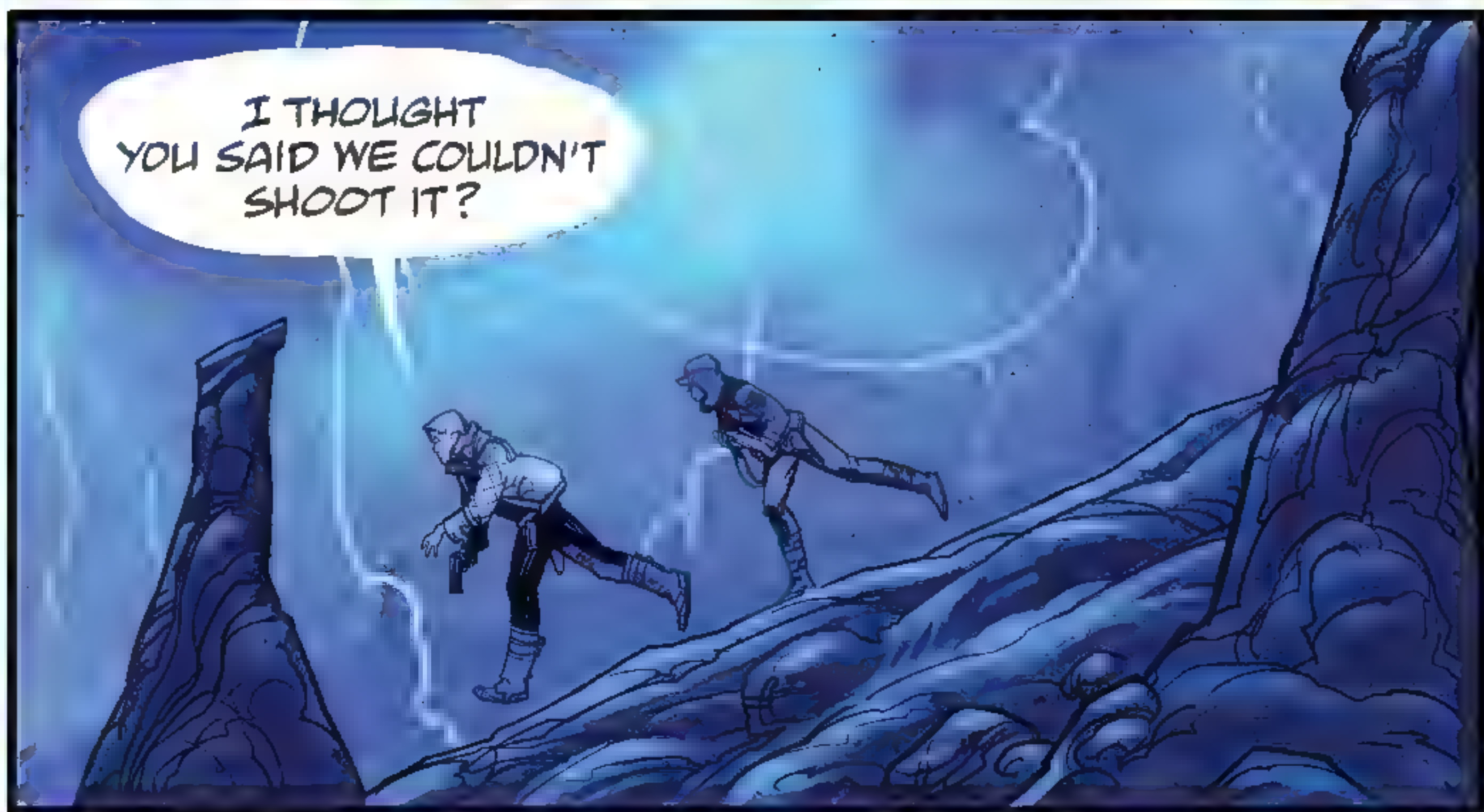
I DON'T THINK WE'LL SEE IT AGAIN.

WHERE'D IT GO?

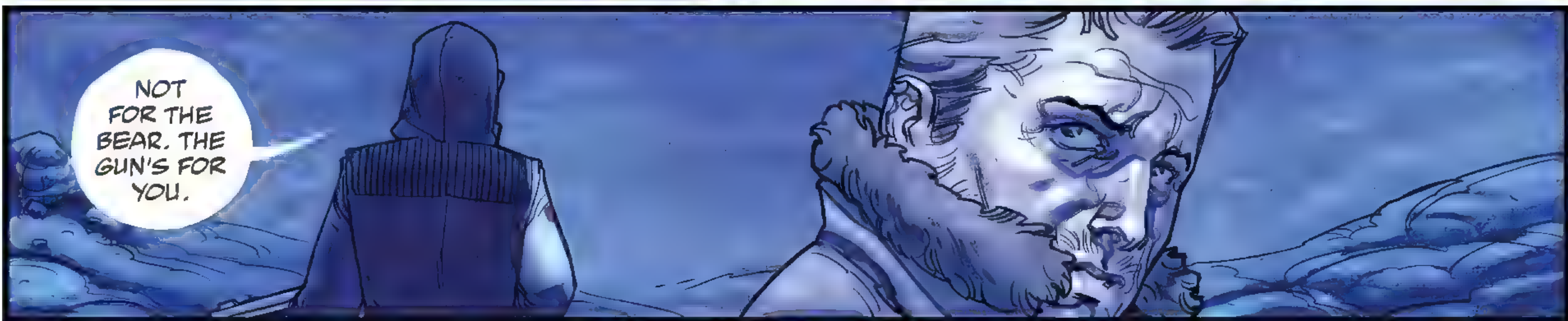


THOSE BONEPICKERS ARE IN ITS PATH. WHEN THEY'RE GONE, IT'LL FIND US. BUT ONCE IT MOVES IT'S TOO FAST TO SEE. WE NEED TO HIDE YOU.

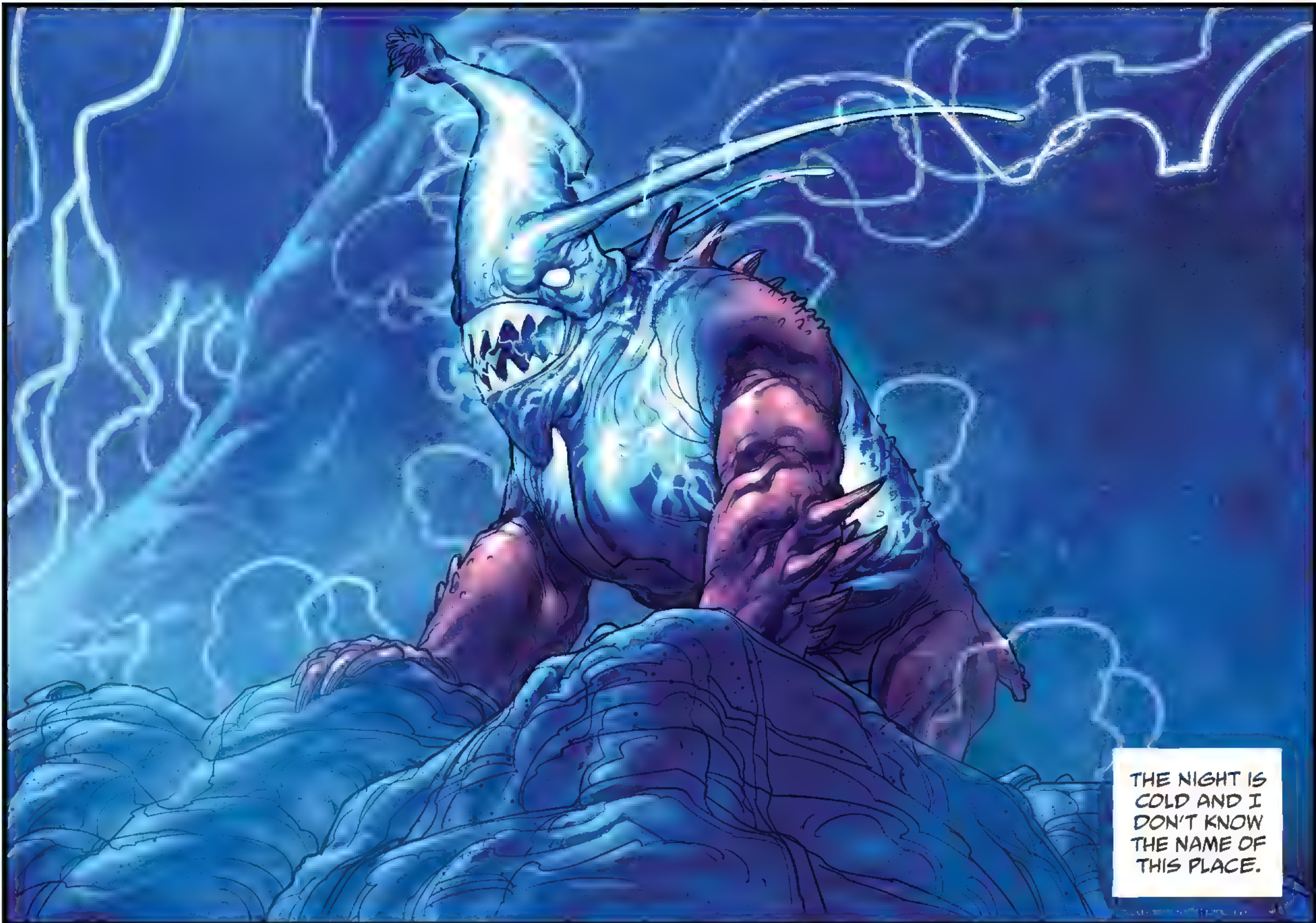
CAN YOU USE THAT GUN?



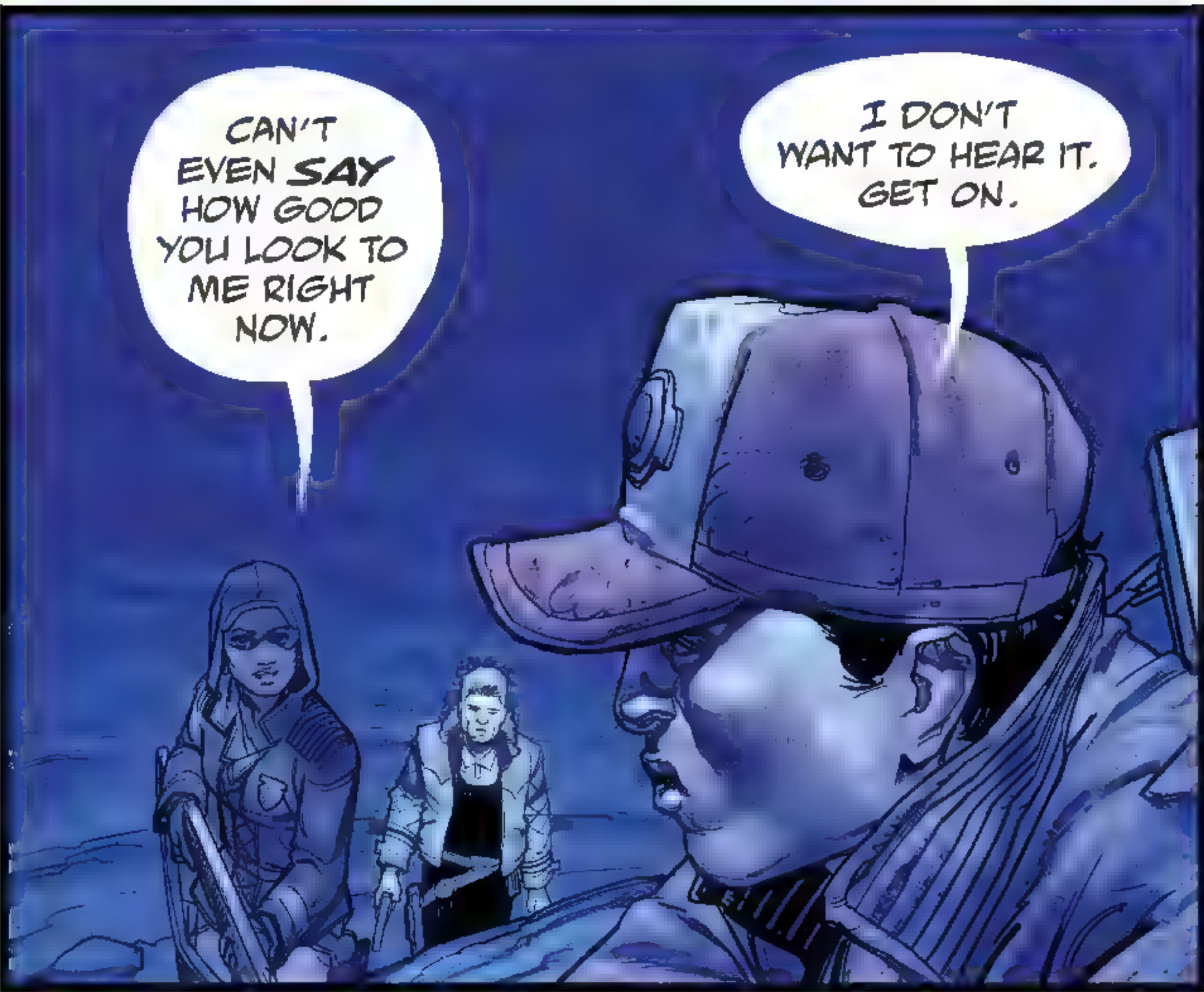
I THOUGHT YOU SAID WE COULDN'T SHOOT IT?

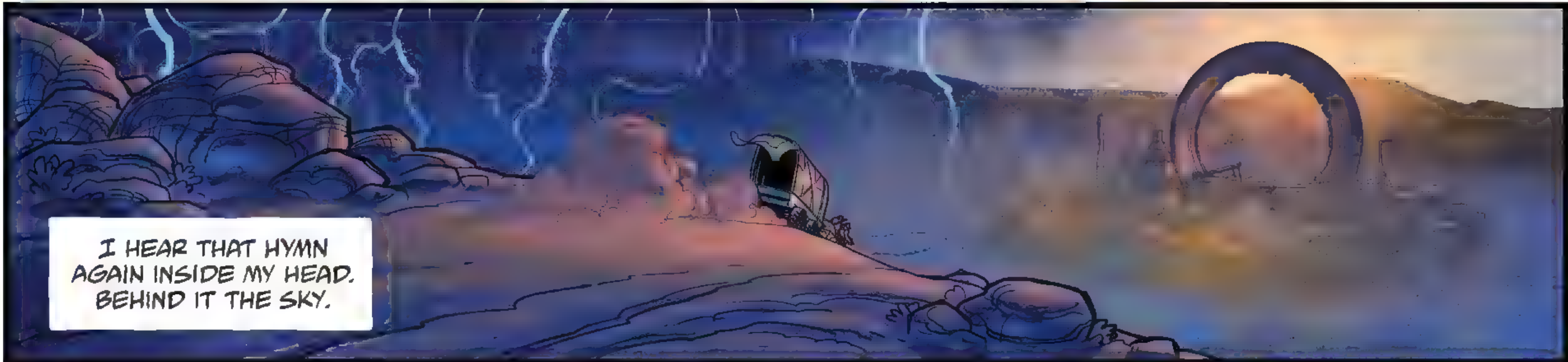
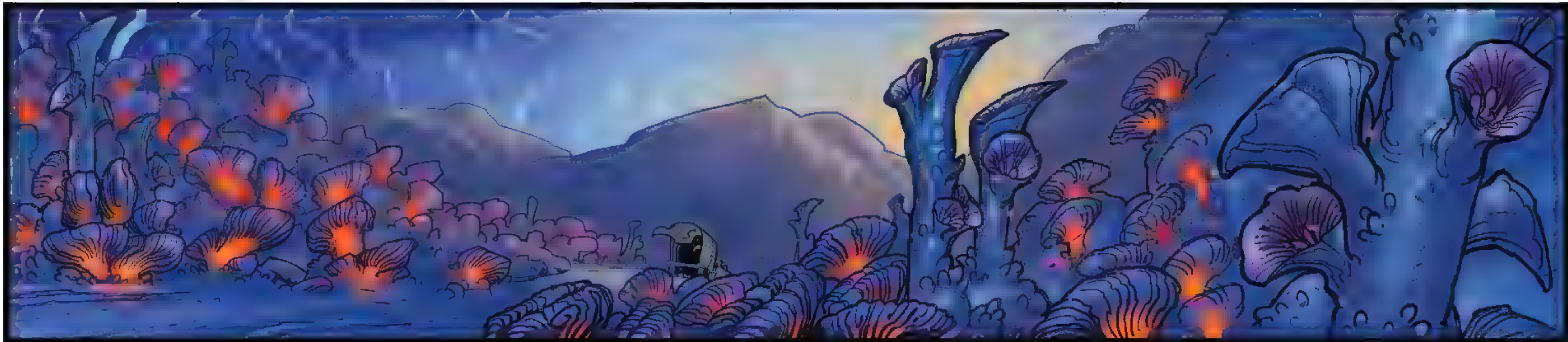


NOT FOR THE BEAR. THE GUN'S FOR YOU.

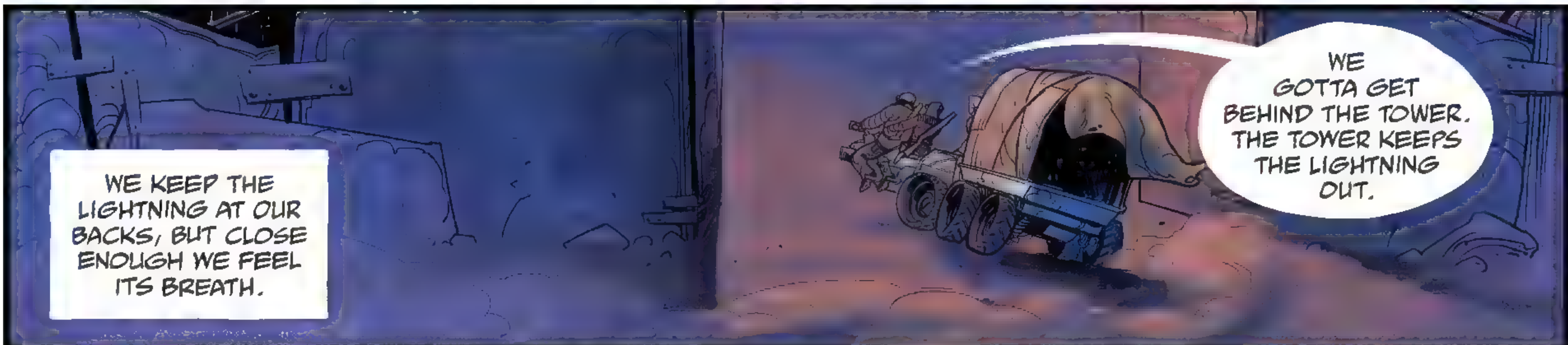


THE NIGHT IS COLD AND I DON'T KNOW THE NAME OF THIS PLACE.





I HEAR THAT HYMN
AGAIN INSIDE MY HEAD.
BEHIND IT THE SKY.



WE KEEP THE
LIGHTNING AT OUR
BACKS, BUT CLOSE
ENOUGH WE FEEL
ITS BREATH.

WE
GOTTA GET
BEHIND THE TOWER.
THE TOWER KEEPS
THE LIGHTNING
OUT.



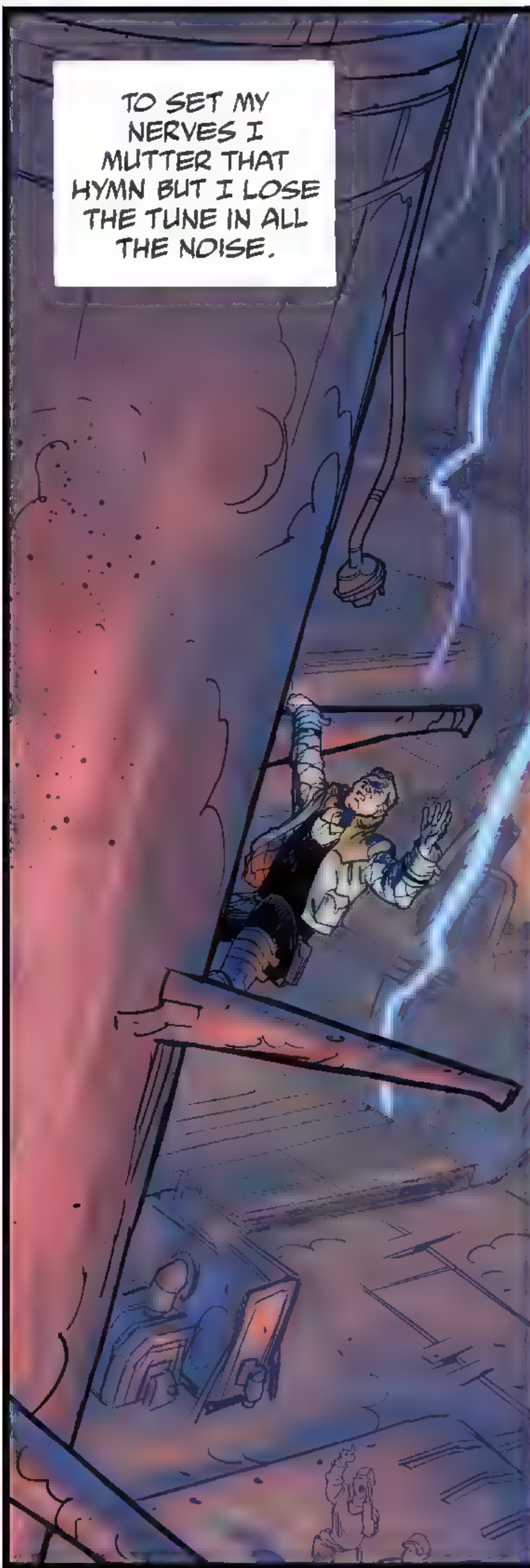
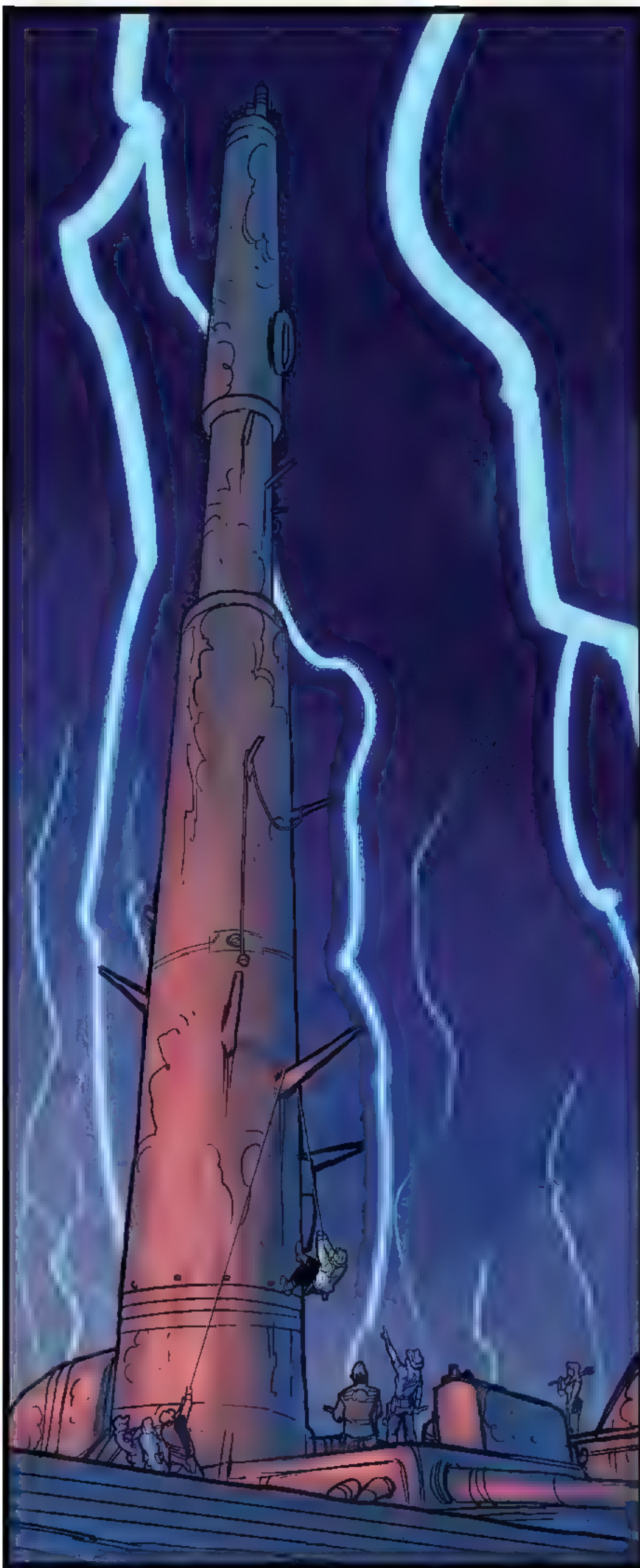
SOME-
BODY BUSTED
IT UP. WE BEEN
TRYING TO FIX
IT FOREVER
NOW.



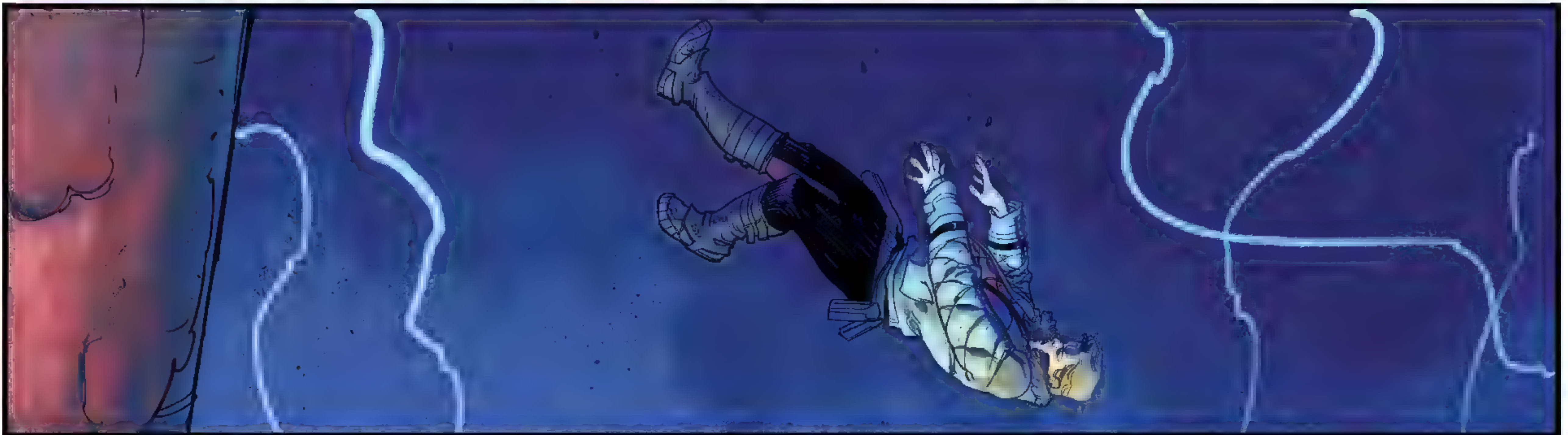
FELL
OUT OF
THE SKY.



AND THEN
THE SKY FELL
AFTER ME.



TO SET MY
NERVES I
MUTTER THAT
HYMN BUT I LOSE
THE TUNE IN ALL
THE NOISE.



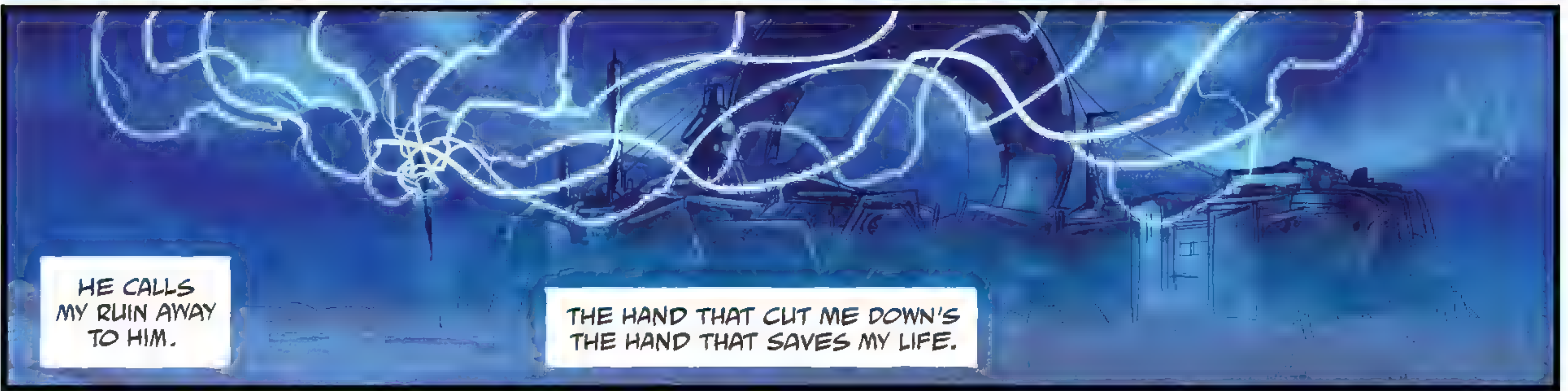
I HEAR YELLS AND
THE BUCKLING SOUNDS
OF THINGS THAT
SHOULDN'T BREAK. MORE
THAN THAT I HEAR THE
WHOLE SKY SCREAMING.



SOMEHOW PAST THAT
THERE'S A CLICKING.
LOUD AND UNSTEADY.



AND UNDER
ALL OF THAT
A RING.

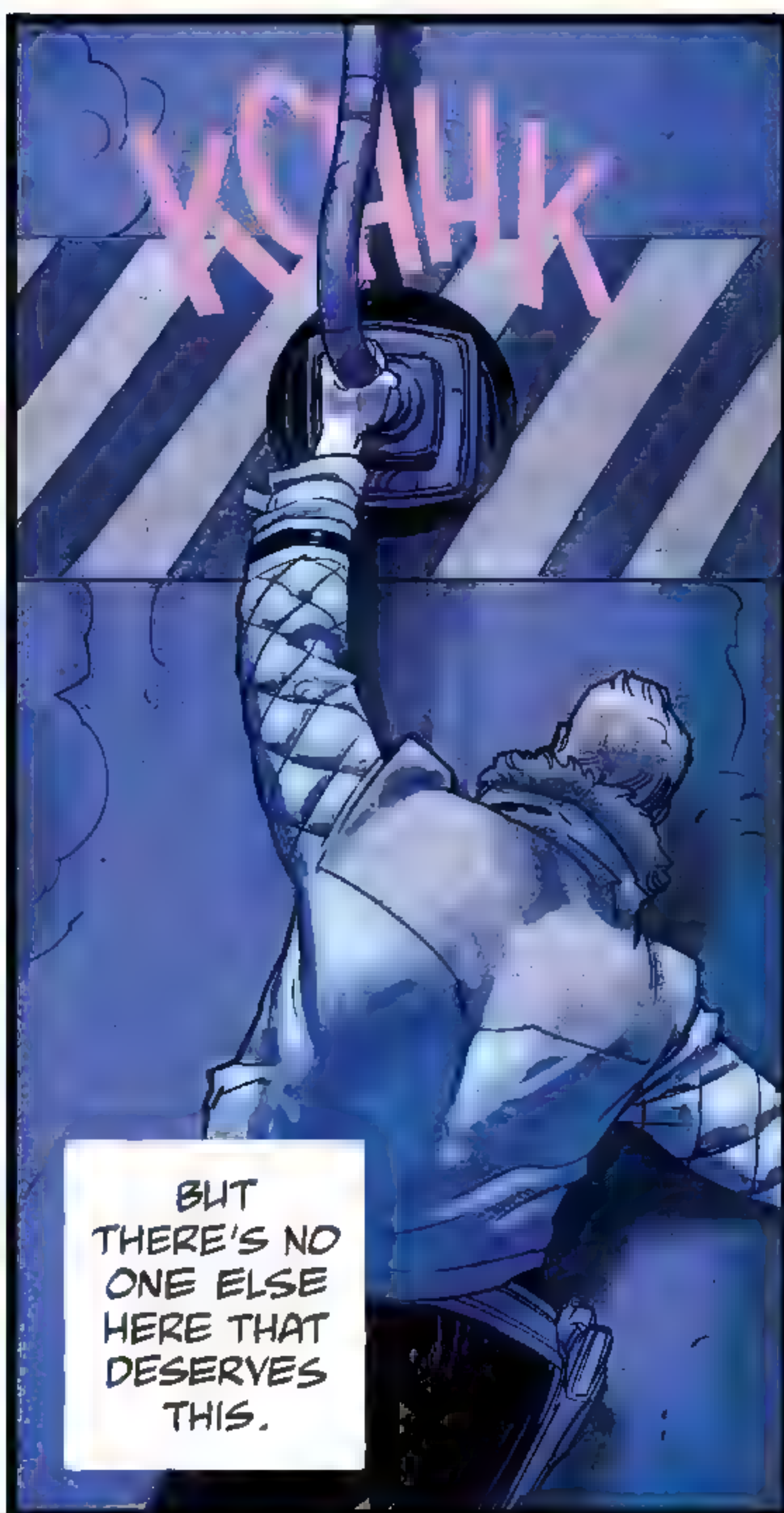


HE CALLS
MY RUIN AWAY
TO HIM.

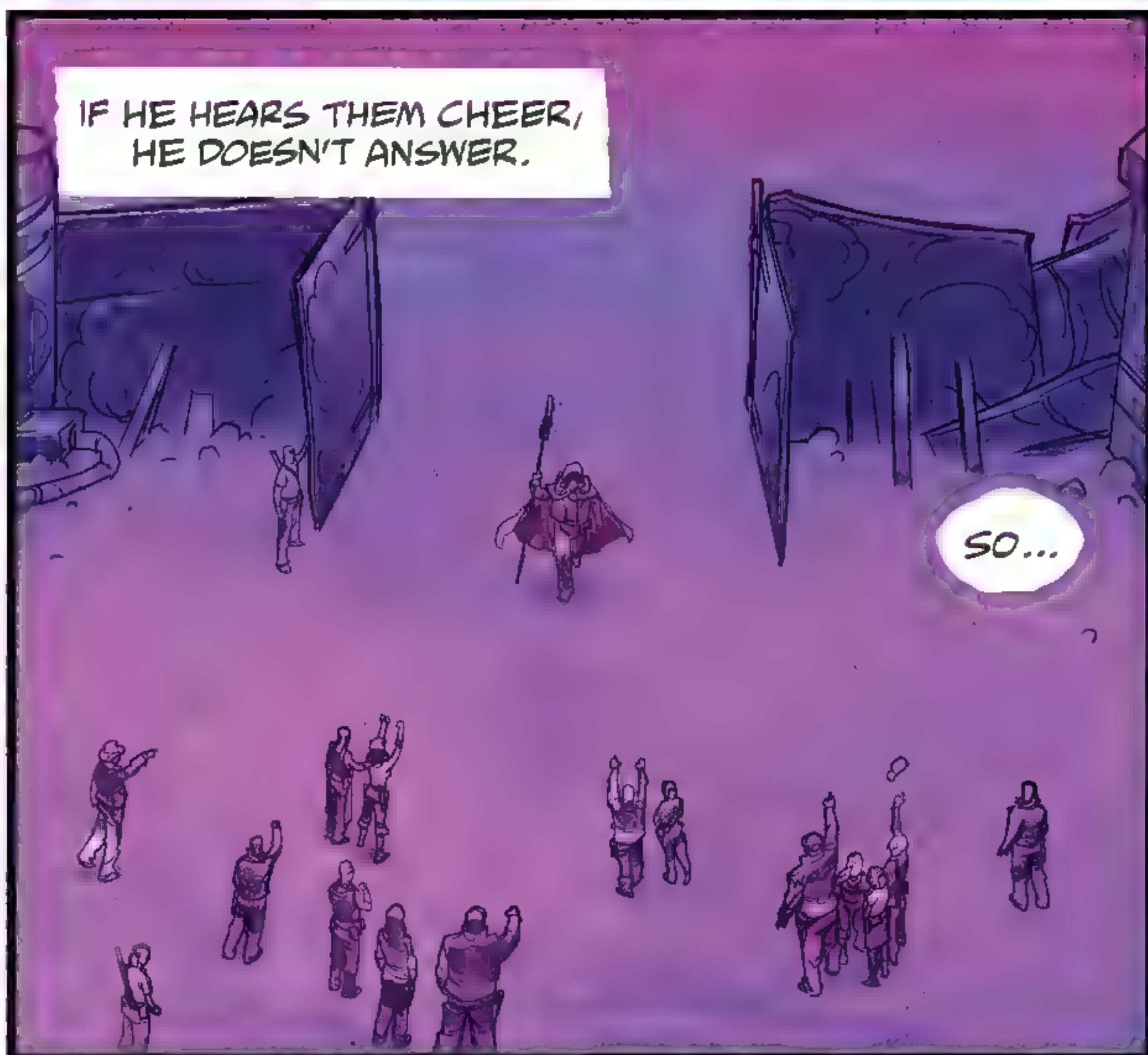
THE HAND THAT CUT ME DOWN'S
THE HAND THAT SAVES MY LIFE.



NEAR THE
TOP I FEEL
MY GUTS
BLEED AND
MY EYES
GET HOT.



BUT
THERE'S NO
ONE ELSE
HERE THAT
DESERVES
THIS.



CHAPTER 3
SINKING

N
30
10

WHATEVER
DAYS HAD
PASSED
HAD BEEN
DERAILED.

MISLAID SO
FAR FROM
WHERE I
CAME THAT
I COULD
NOT TRUST
THEM.

THE
GROUND
ITSELF
UNFAMILIAR.
THE SKY.

FATHER?

THE
VOICES
AROUND
ME.



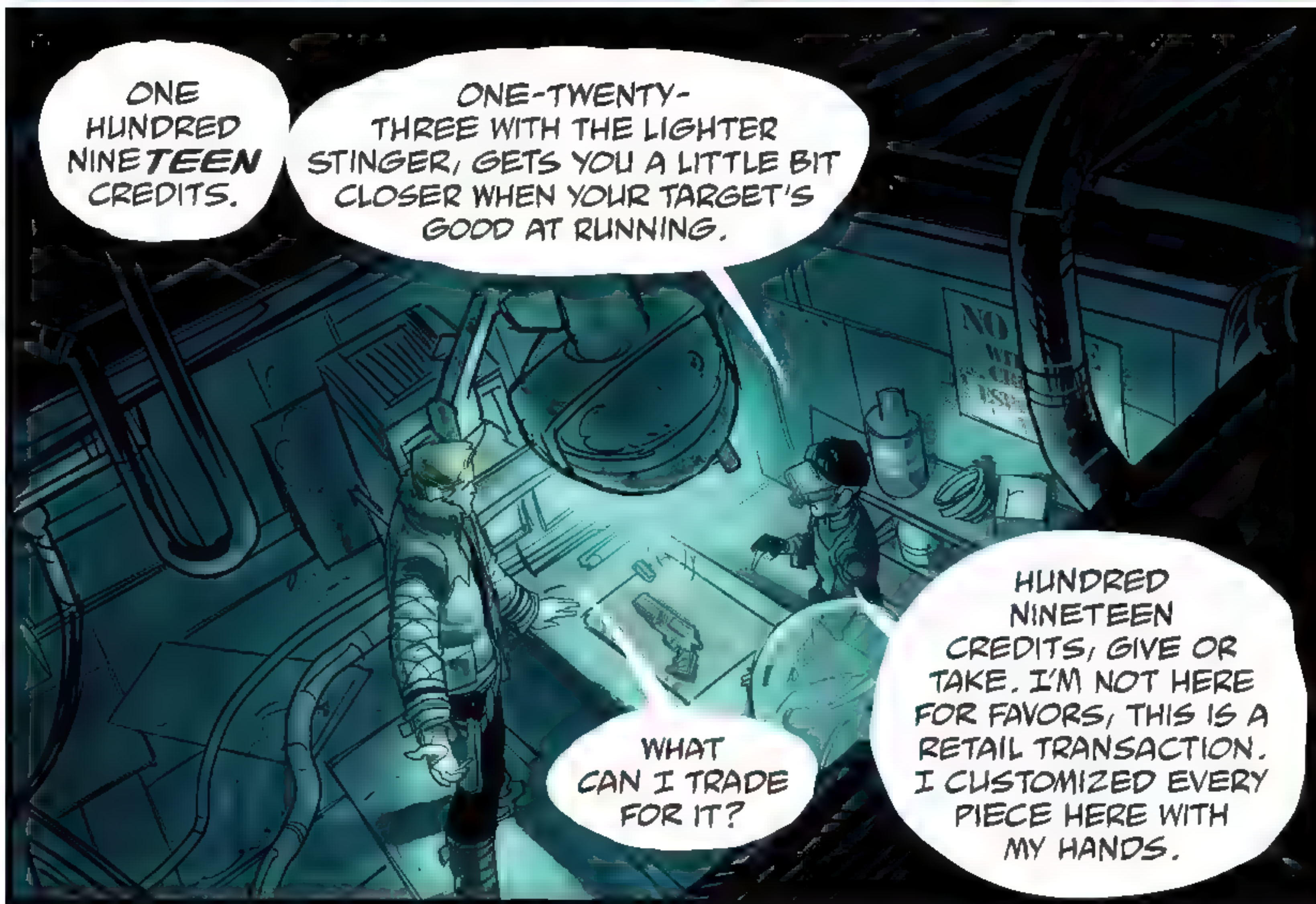
WHERE'D YOU GO?

SHE ASKED 'TIL HER VOICE CRACKED AND THEN SHE STOPPED AND ASKED WHY I WAS HERE. MAN, I'D BEEN THERE WITH HER TWELVE YEARS. WHAT PART OF THAT MAKES SENSE TO ASK A MAN YOU SEE EVERY SINGLE DAY?



YOU WANNA HOLD IT?

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT COSTS.



ONE HUNDRED NINETEEN CREDITS.

ONE-TWENTY-THREE WITH THE LIGHTER STINGER, GETS YOU A LITTLE BIT CLOSER WHEN YOUR TARGET'S GOOD AT RUNNING.

WHAT CAN I TRADE FOR IT?

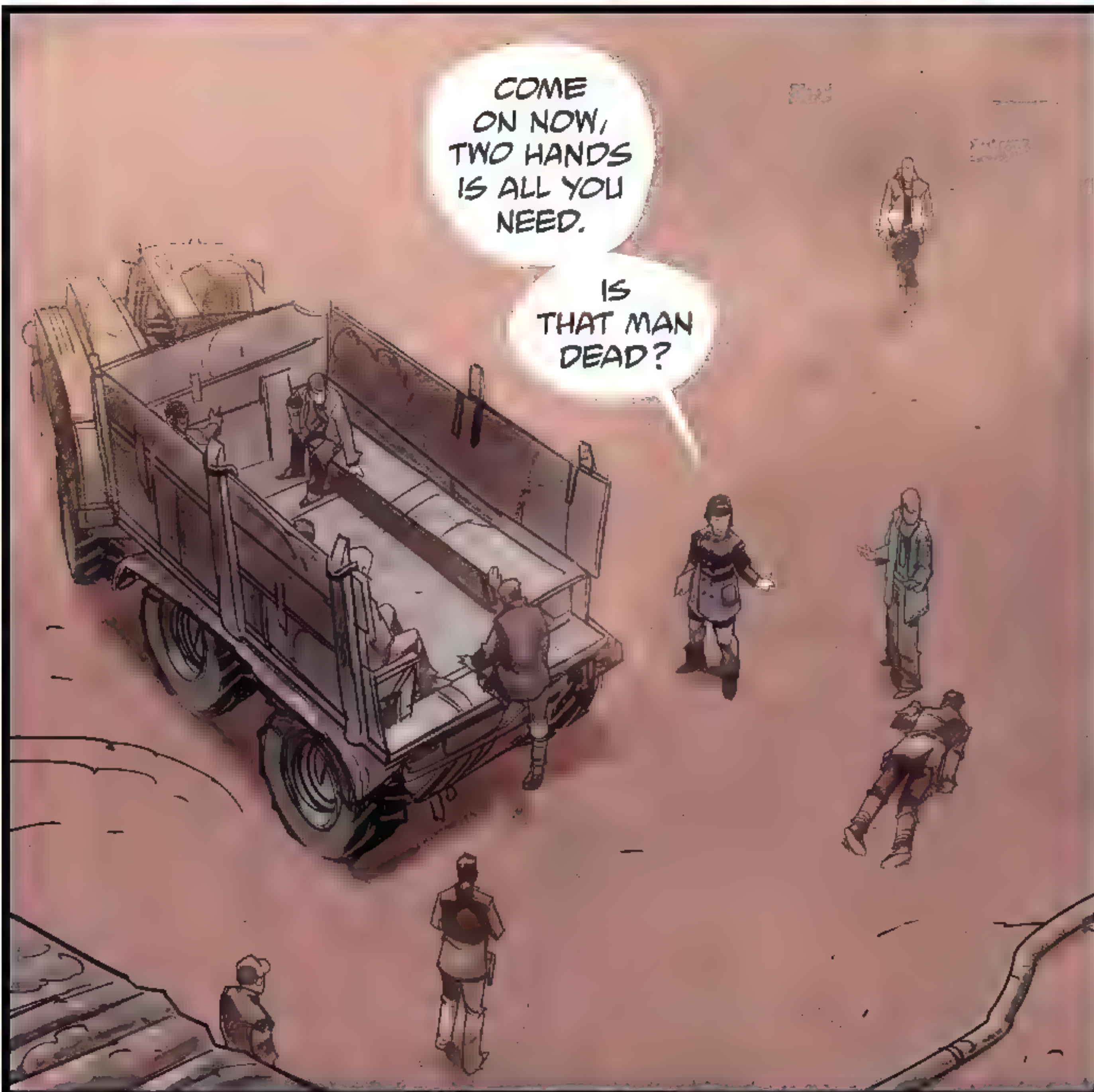
HUNDRED NINETEEN CREDITS, GIVE OR TAKE. I'M NOT HERE FOR FAVORS, THIS IS A RETAIL TRANSACTION. I CUSTOMIZED EVERY PIECE HERE WITH MY HANDS.



CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE.



DAY'S WORK FOR A DAY'S PAY.



COME ON NOW, TWO HANDS IS ALL YOU NEED.

IS THAT MAN DEAD?

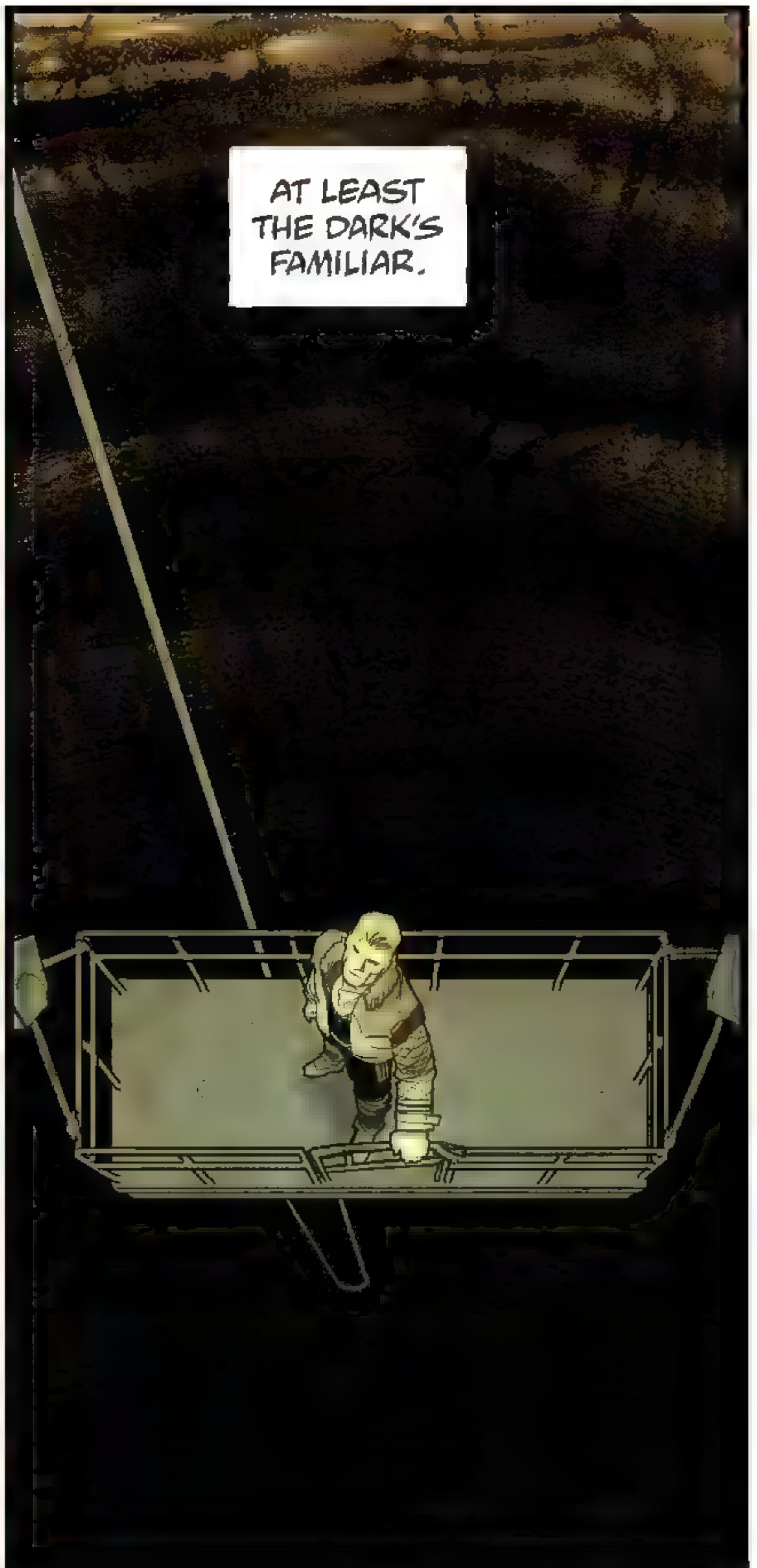
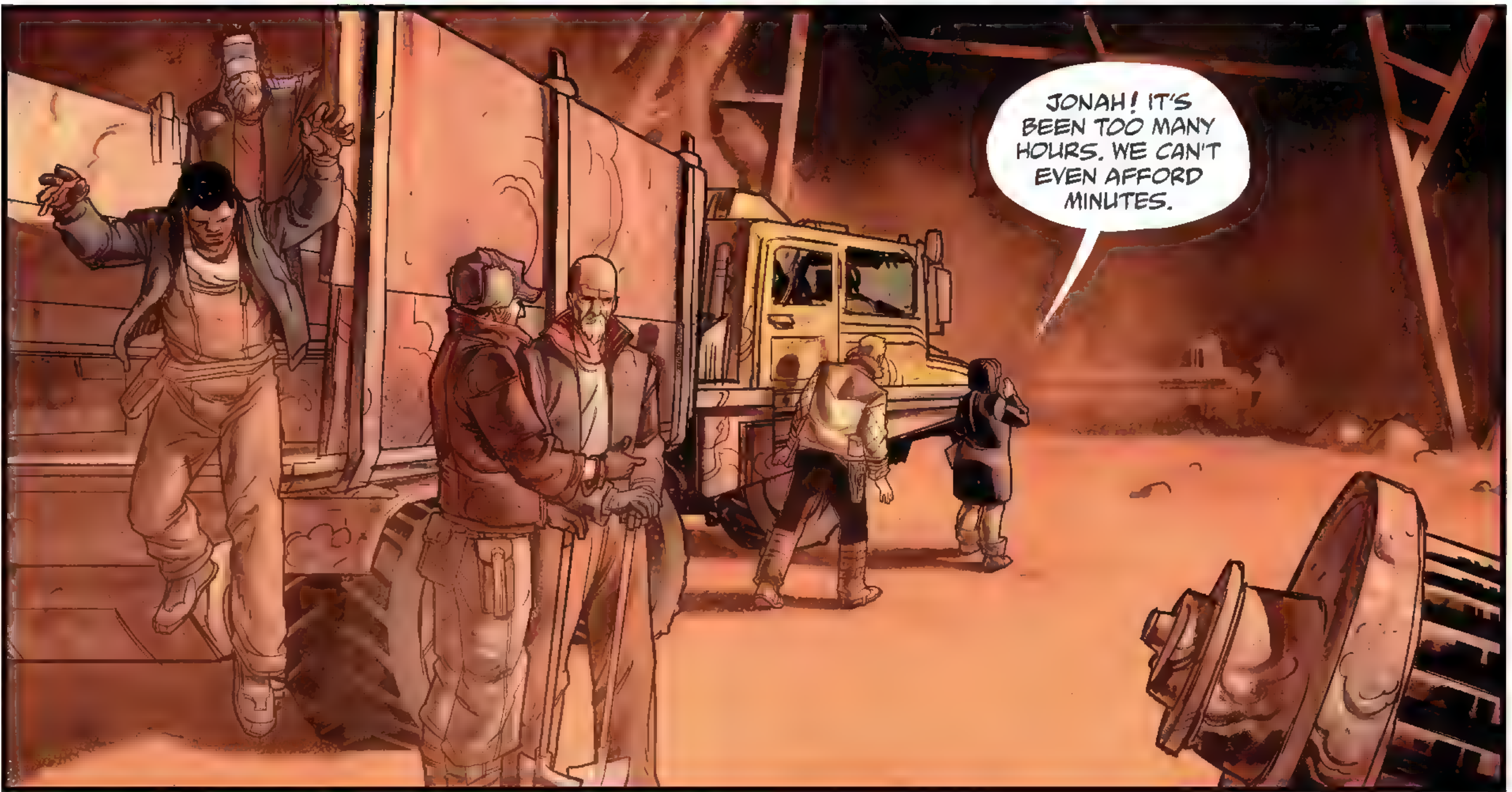


EACH DAY FARTHER FROM REPRISAL.

...FARTHER
FROM HER.

I DON'T
TRUST THAT
SUN TODAY.

THAT SUN'S
THE IMPOSTOR.





LOWERED
DOWN
THROUGH
A HOLE IN
THE GUTS
OF THE
WORLD.

SEE?
LESS DEAD
THAN YOU
EXPECTED!
STEP OFF NOW
AND SEND THE
BUCKET
BACK.

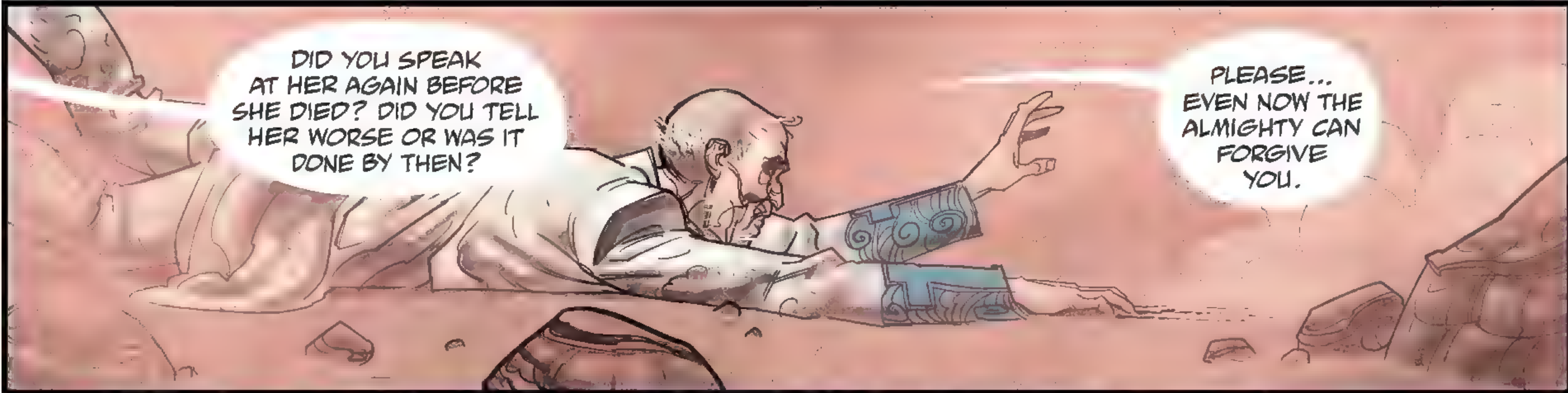


STEP OFF
TO WHERE?



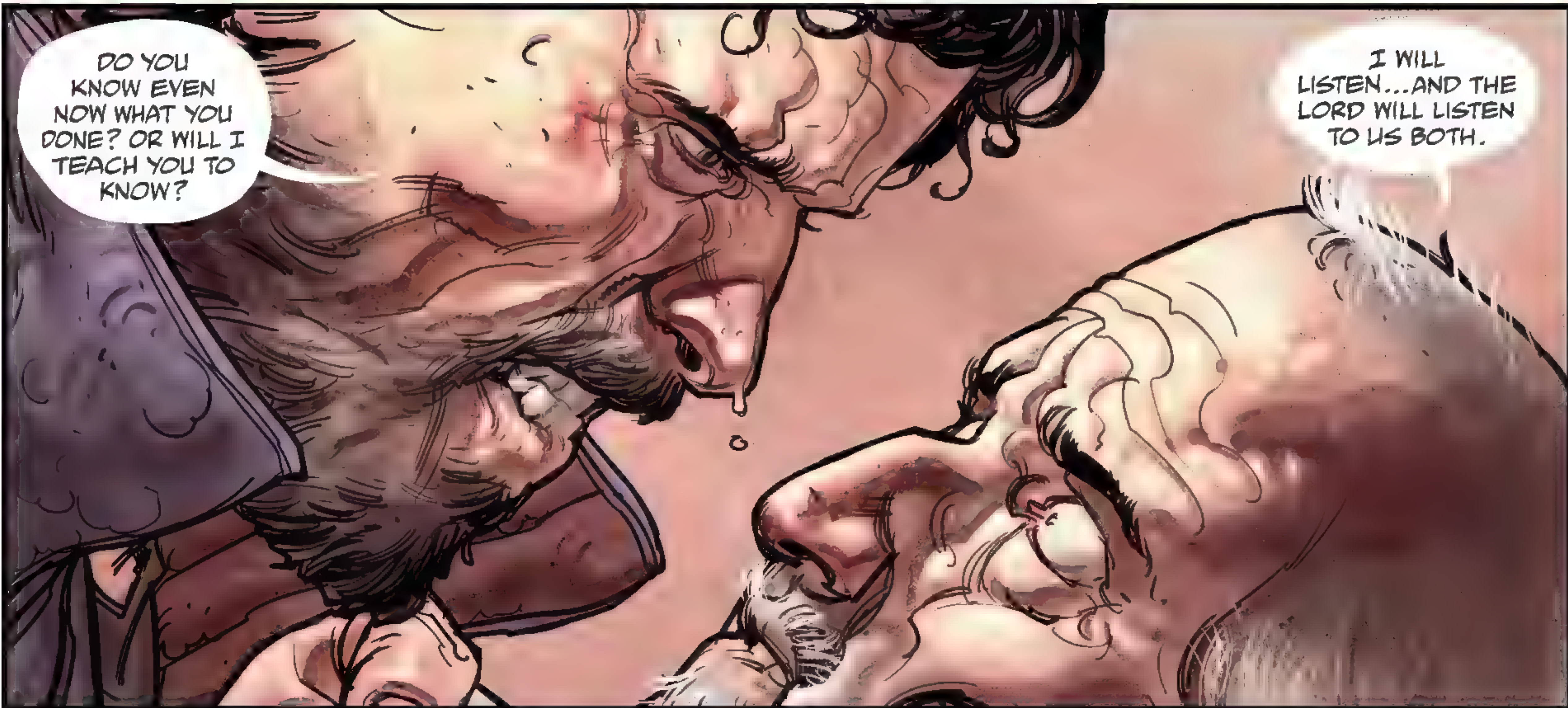


BUT THIS
KINDA DARK
EVEN I
DON'T KNOW.



DID YOU SPEAK
AT HER AGAIN BEFORE
SHE DIED? DID YOU TELL
HER WORSE OR WAS IT
DONE BY THEN?

PLEASE...
EVEN NOW THE
ALMIGHTY CAN
FORGIVE
YOU.



DO YOU
KNOW EVEN
NOW WHAT YOU
DONE? OR WILL I
TEACH YOU TO
KNOW?

I WILL
LISTEN...AND THE
LORD WILL LISTEN
TO US BOTH.



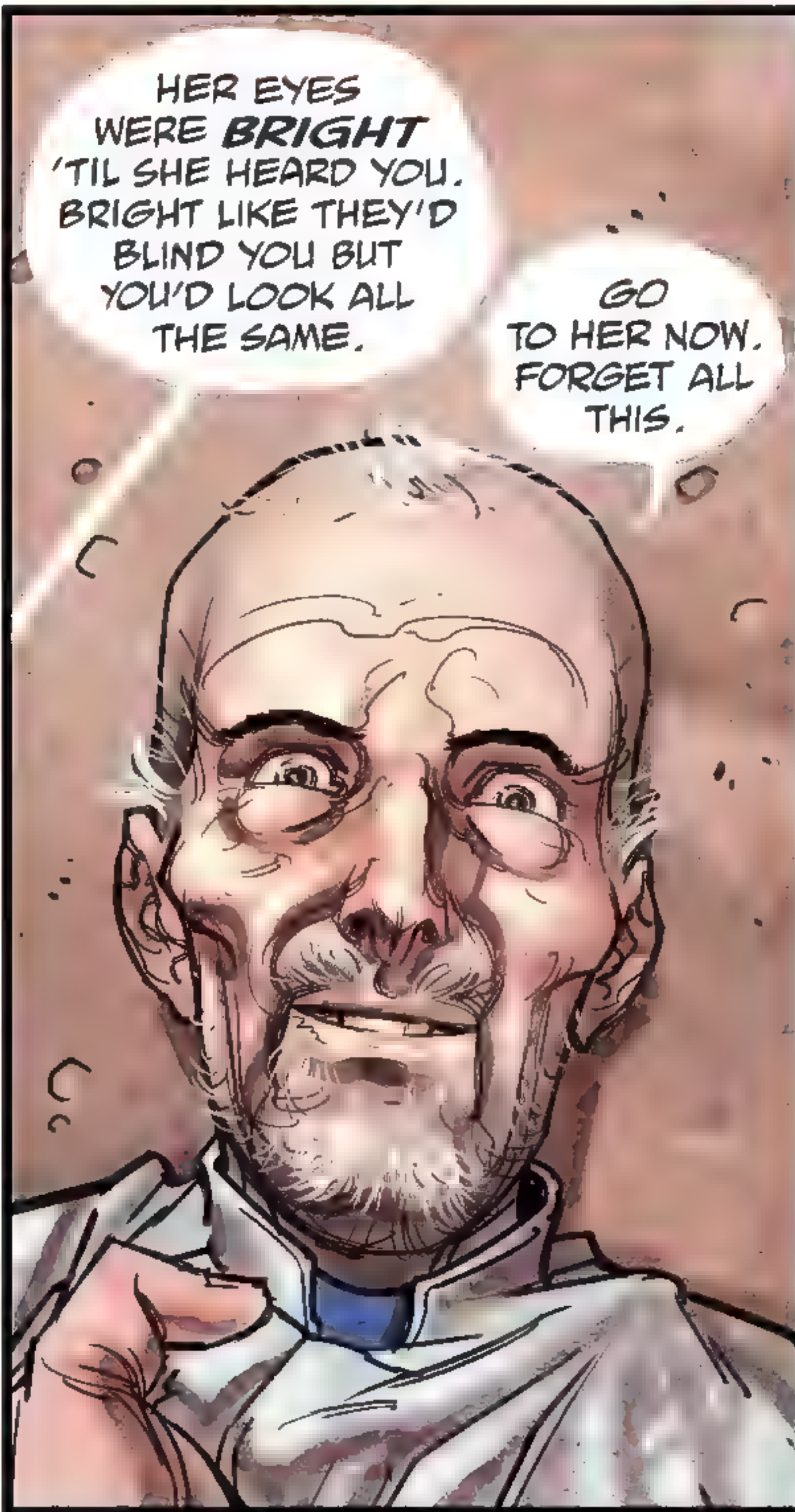
WHAT
MAN OF CLOTH
EVER LISTENED?
LOOKING DOWN
YOUR NOSE AT US
WHO LOST OUR
STEP.

I DO
HEAR YOU,
MY SON. WE
CAN CLIMB FROM
HERE TOGETHER
NOW. THERE
ARE STEPS
AHEAD.



HOW
COULD **SHE**
CLIMB WITH
ME ON HER
BACK?

STILL
THREE YEARS
SHE CARRIED
ALL OF IT. WITH
YOUR WORDS THE
ONLY THINGS TO
MAKE HER SINK
BELOW.

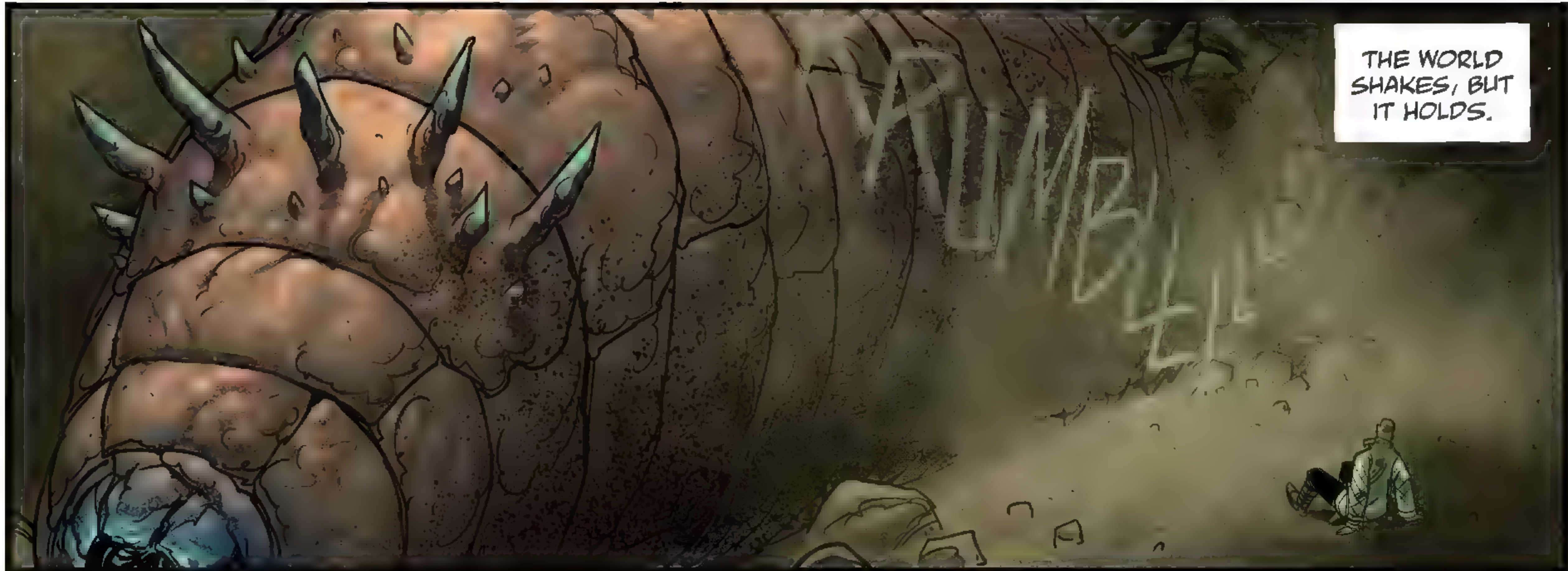


HER EYES
WERE **BRIGHT**
'TIL SHE HEARD YOU.
BRIGHT LIKE THEY'D
BLIND YOU BUT
YOU'D LOOK ALL
THE SAME.

GO
TO HER NOW.
FORGET ALL
THIS.



BRIGHT
'TIL YOUR VOICE
SPRAYED LIKE **PISS**
AND KNOCKED
THEM LIGHTS
OUT.



THE WORLD
SHAKES, BUT
IT HOLDS.



LIKE A TRAIN GOING BY.
GOTTA WAIT FOR IT TO PASS.
BUT HE CAN'T SEE TO WANT
YOU DEAD AND HE CAN'T EAT
BUT ROCKS AND DIRT.

YOU CAN
STILL GET
KILT, BUT IT
DON'T
MEAN IT.



WELL THEN
I WON'T HOLD A
GRUDGE.

YOU
COME DOWN FROM
THE NORTH, WORKER?
I REMEMBER THAT
FACE, SOME
WAY.



I
CAME
DOWN,
MORE OR
LESS.

WELL
THEN YOU'RE
USED TO A
DESCENT.

DON'T
FILTHY IT UP,
DELLA.



I MEANT
THE TUNNEL,
CHUCK. THOSE
THINGS'LL GO TWO
MILES DOWN AT
LEAST.



THOSE THINGS... THE WORM? YOU'RE GOING **TOWARDS** 'EM?

MAYBE **YOU'RE** HERE FOR A VACATION. BUT THAT'S THE JOB THAT HIRED US ON.

GOT A GOOD FEELING. THAT OL' BABY LOOKED **FULL** UP TO ME.



FULL?

TO THE BRIM WITH THAT FETID GOLD.



YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU SIGNED UP FOR, I CAN SEE IT IN THEM SAD EYES OF YOURS.

THEM CREECHERS EAT THEIR WAY THROUGH THIS GROUND BELOW US LIKE A LAYER CAKE.

THEN WHAT THEY MAKE OF IT, WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL THE WASTE, THAT'S WHAT POWERS NEAR EVERY SINGLE THING ABOVE.

WE'RE MINING **WORM SHIT?**

IF WE'RE LUCKY, FRIEND. THEY DON'T GIVE OUT BUT ONCE A MONTH, THOSE THINGS. SO IF WE'RE LUCKY.



WHEELERS COMIN'. MAKE WAY.

THAT THE WORMS?

WAS YOU BORN TODAY?



JUST DON'T STEP IN THEIR WAY. DON'T HOLD THEM UP AND THEY WON'T EVEN LOOK AT YOU.

FEEL THEIR
PRESENCE IN
MY THROAT.
INSTINCTS
TELLING ME
TO RUN.



JUST BREATHE
SLOW. THERE'S SOMETHING
CHEMICAL, MAKES YOU SCARED.
SOME PART OF THEM AND US
THAT DOESN'T MIX.

THEY HERE
TO DIG THROUGH
SHIT, TOO?



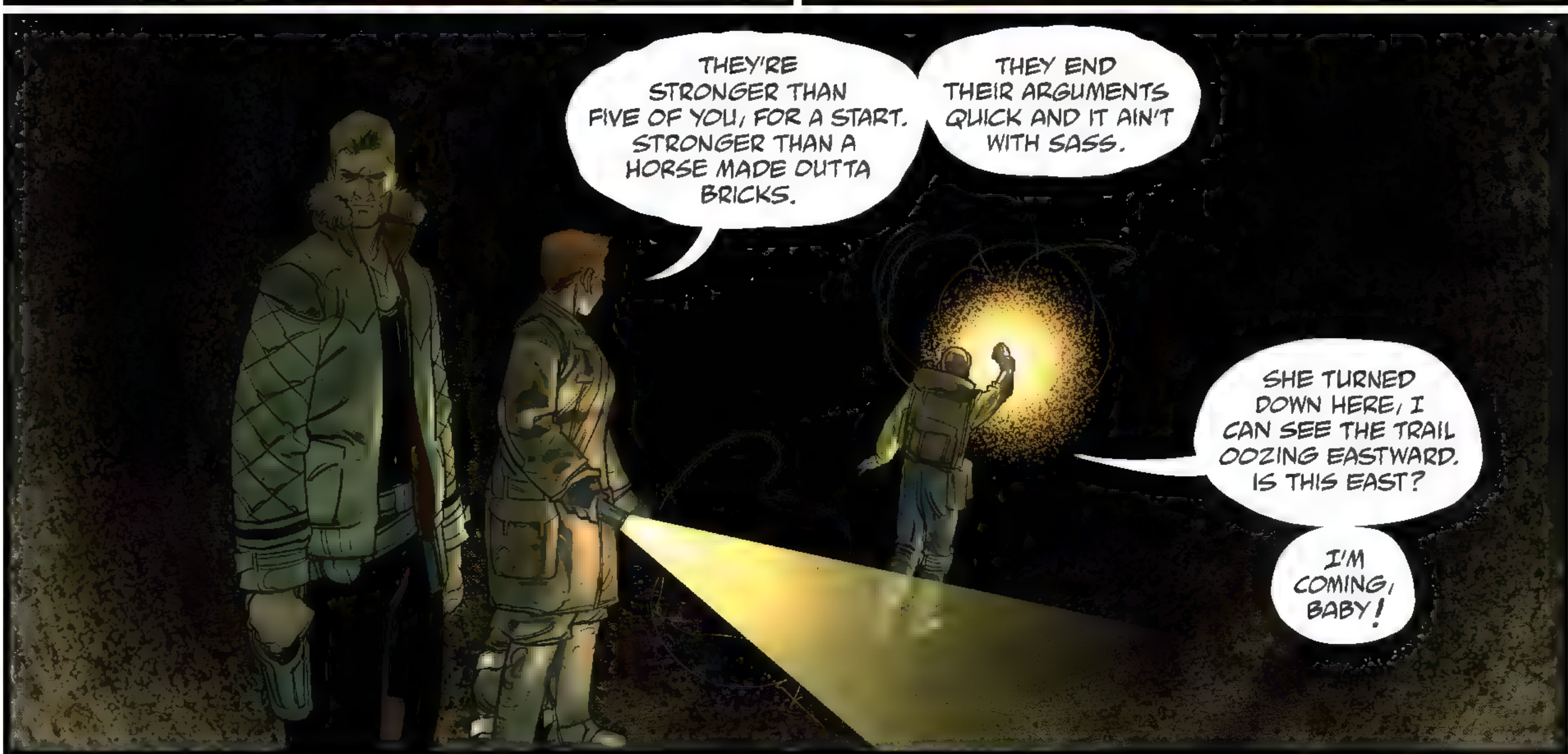
THAT'S
A HUMAN JOB, THEY'RE
HIGHER UP THE CHAIN THAN
THAT. THEY'RE HERE TO
COLLECT.

WHAT
MAKES THEM
BETTER THAN
ME?



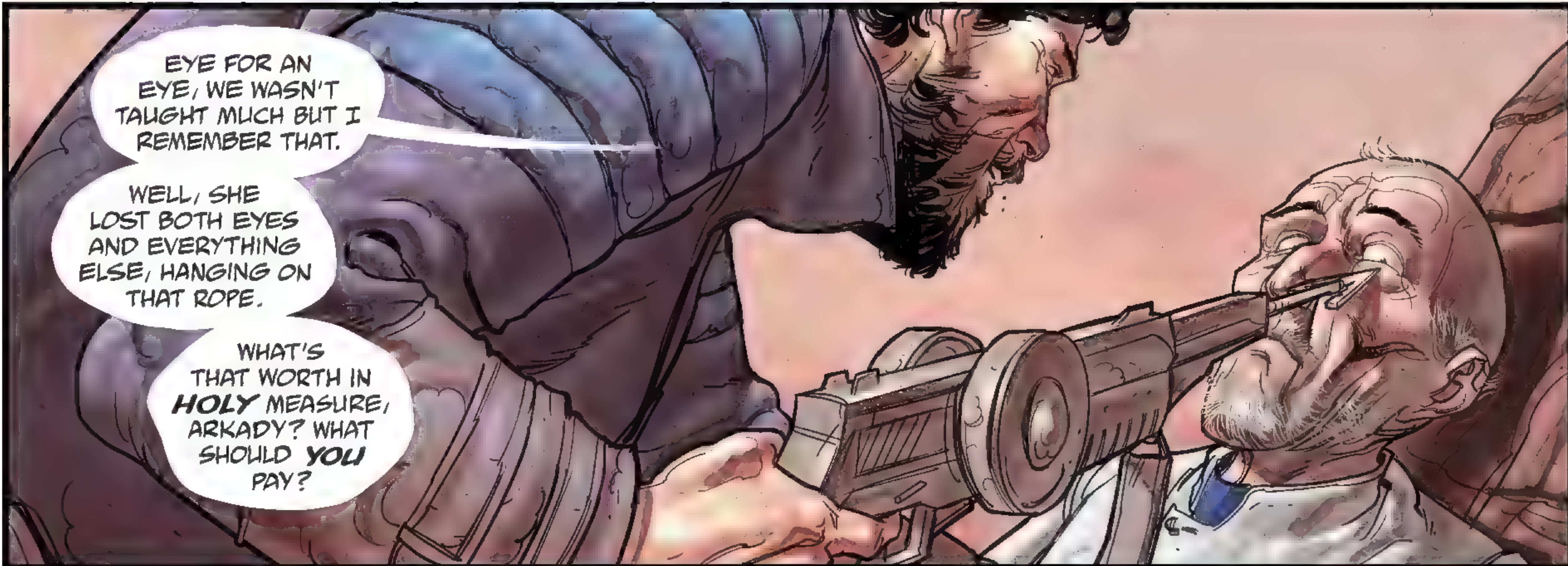
THEY'RE
STRONGER THAN
FIVE OF YOU, FOR A START.
STRONGER THAN A
HORSE MADE OUTTA
BRICKS.

THEY END
THEIR ARGUMENTS
QUICK AND IT AIN'T
WITH SASS.



SHE TURNED
DOWN HERE, I
CAN SEE THE TRAIL
OOZING EASTWARD.
IS THIS EAST?

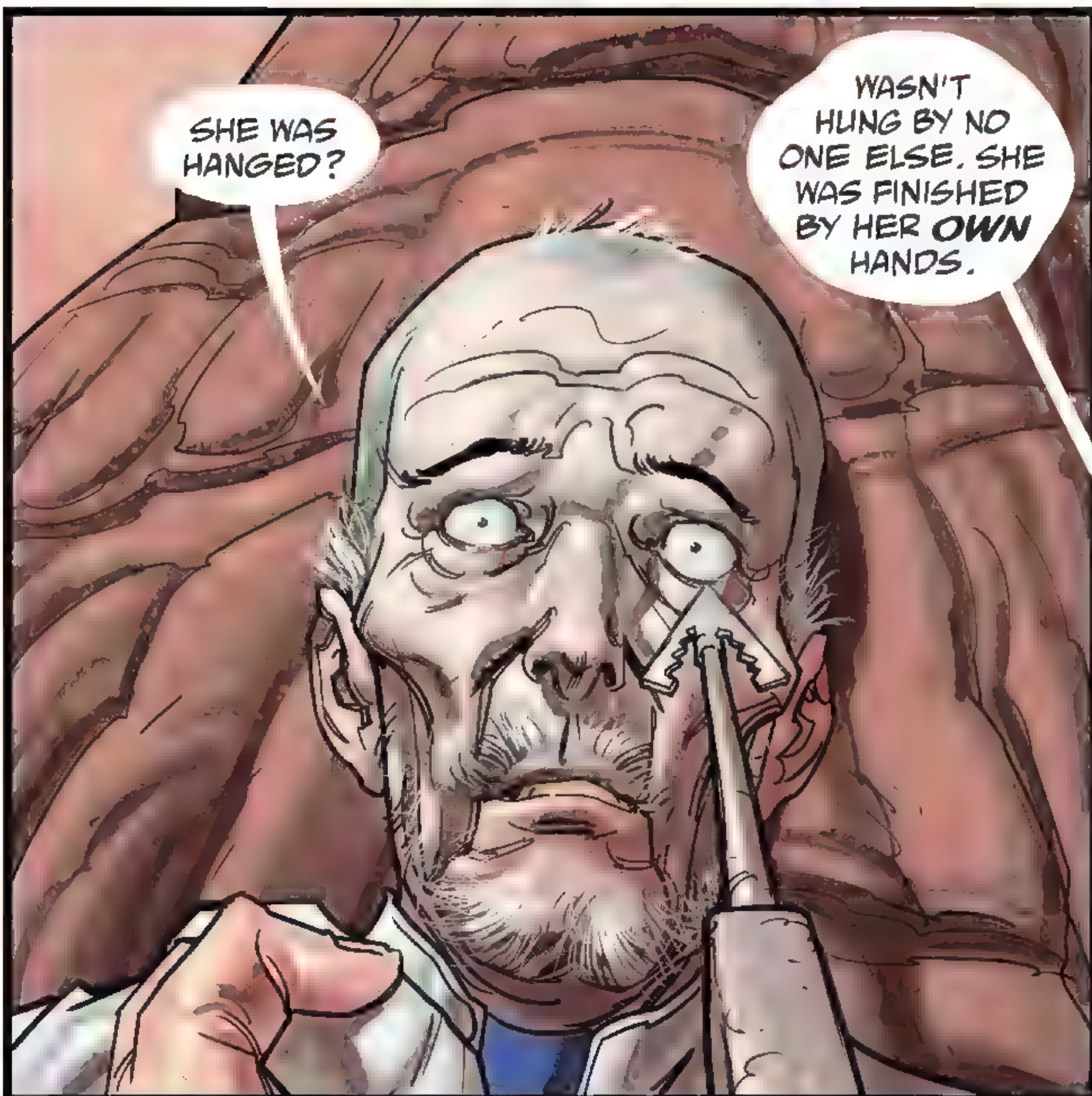
I'M
COMING,
BABY!



EYE FOR AN EYE, WE WASN'T TAUGHT MUCH BUT I REMEMBER THAT.

WELL, SHE LOST BOTH EYES AND EVERYTHING ELSE, HANGING ON THAT ROPE.

WHAT'S THAT WORTH IN **HOLY** MEASURE, ARKADY? WHAT SHOULD **YOU** PAY?



SHE WAS HANGED?

WASN'T HUNG BY NO ONE ELSE. SHE WAS FINISHED BY HER **OWN** HANDS.



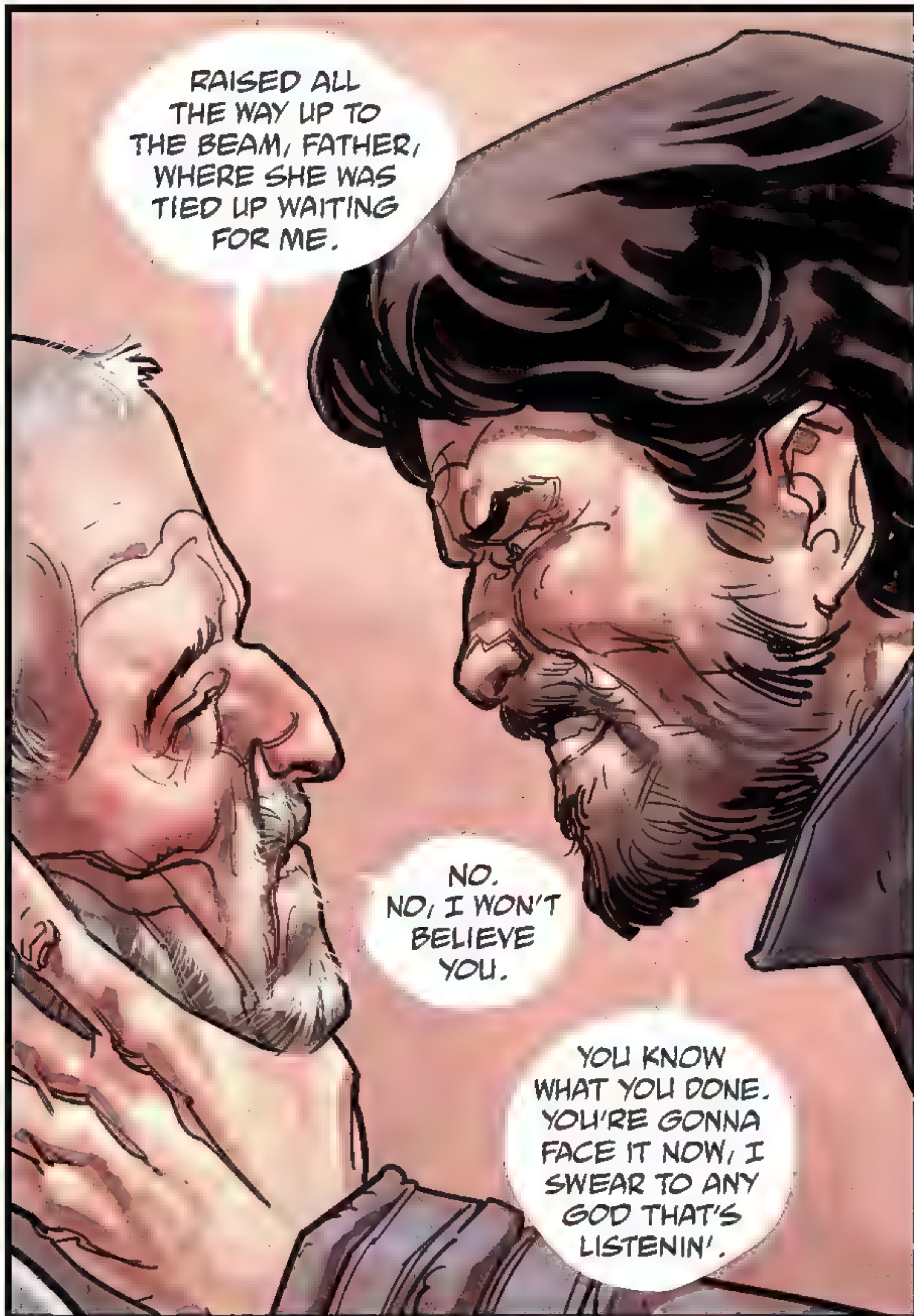
SHE WOULD **NOT**. SHE WOULDN'T DO THAT TO HERSELF.

WHY WOULD SHE NOT, OF ANYONE? SHE THAT HAD AN DUNCE OF HOPE IN ALL HER LIFE COMBINED AND LOST IT TO YOU?



WAS SHE SO SPECIAL THAT YOU HAD TO BREAK HER LIKE SOME ORNAMENTAL THING?

I SPOKE TO RAISE HER UP!



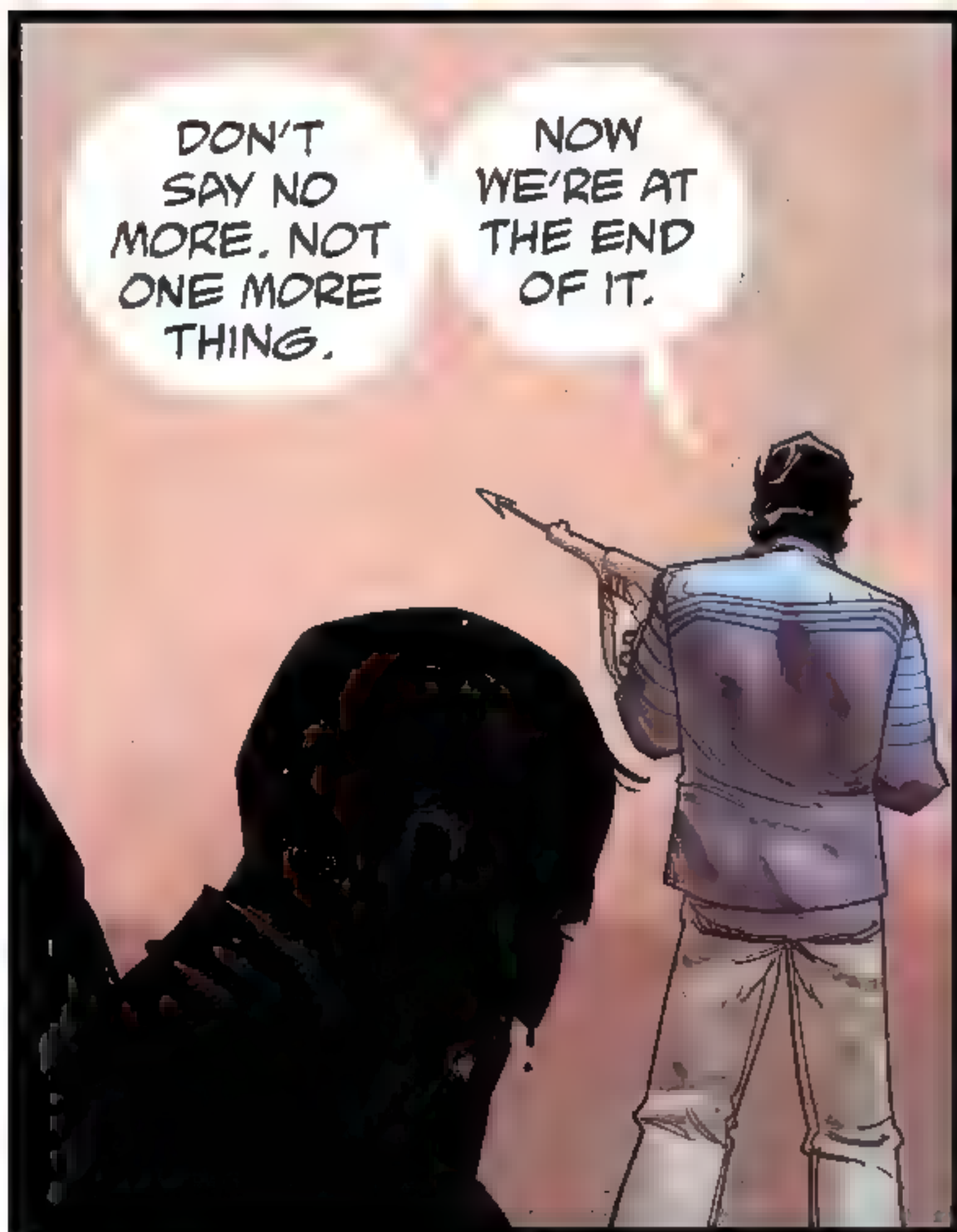
RAISED ALL THE WAY UP TO THE BEAM, FATHER, WHERE SHE WAS TIED UP WAITING FOR ME.

NO. NO, I WON'T BELIEVE YOU.

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU DONE. YOU'RE GONNA FACE IT NOW, I SWEAR TO ANY GOD THAT'S LISTENIN'.



IT'S A
SIN! SHE
WOULDN'T DO
IT, TO CAST HER
OWN SOUL INTO
HELL.



DON'T
SAY NO
MORE. NOT
ONE MORE
THING.

NOW
WE'RE AT
THE END
OF IT.



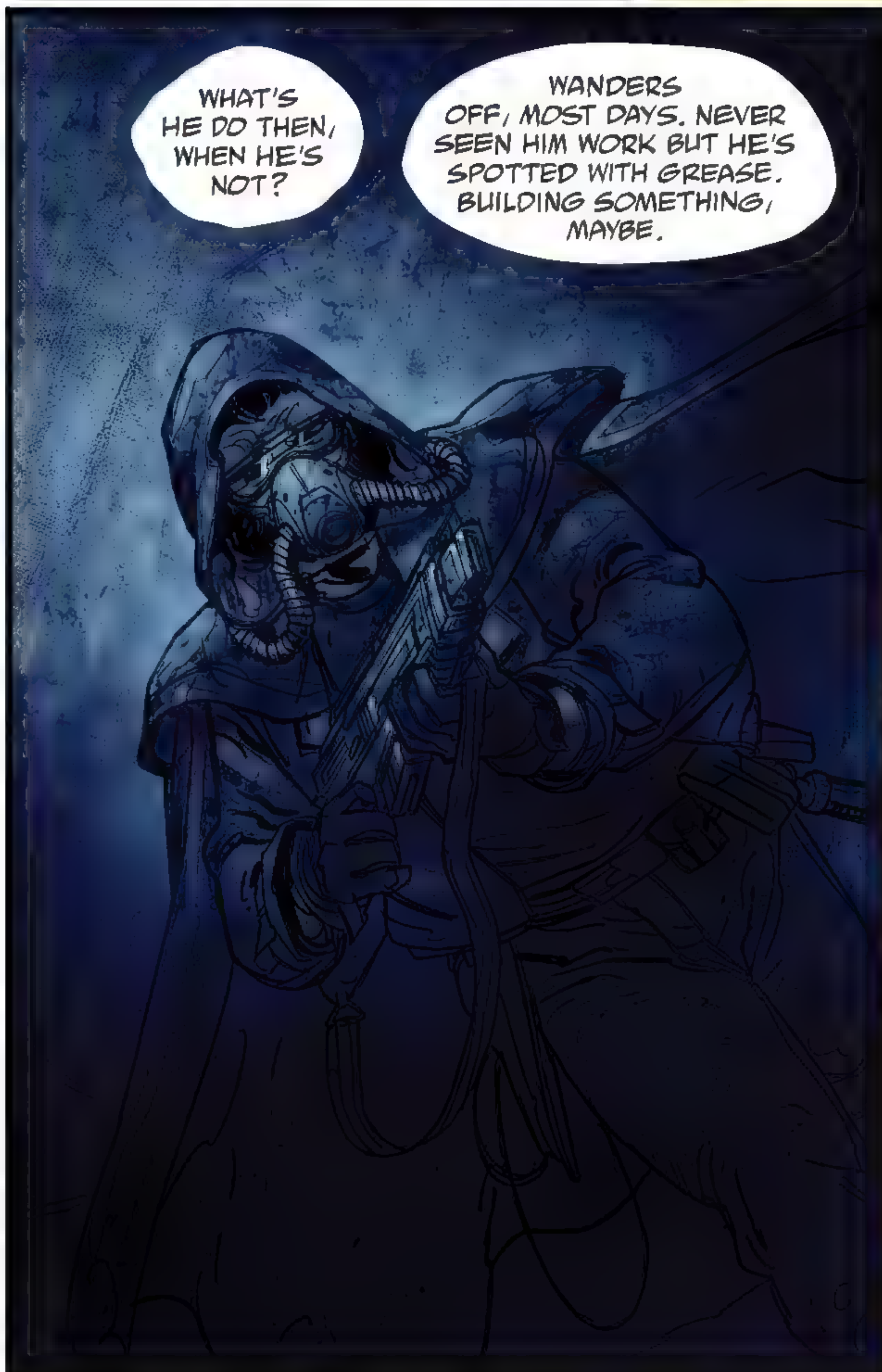
IF SHE
WAS DAMNED
WILL YOU
RISE NOW
INSTEAD?

WILL YOU
SAVE ME, IF
I HOLD ON AS
YOU QUIT THIS
WORLD?

SHOW
ME THE
ROAD TO
GRACE.



IS THIS
THE WAY?





DON'T *SMELL*
LIKE CHRISTMAS.

LOOK
AT THIS. MUST'VE
GOT HIS INSIDES UPSET,
I NEVER SAW SO
MUCH FROM ONE OF
THEM.



DON'T STEP
ALL THROUGH IT.
CENTRALIZE AND
THEN SCOOP. BE
EFFICIENT AND
IT GOES MUCH
FASTER.



SOME
TIME AGO I
WAS SHOT. THAT
DAY WAS BETTER
THAN THIS
ONE.

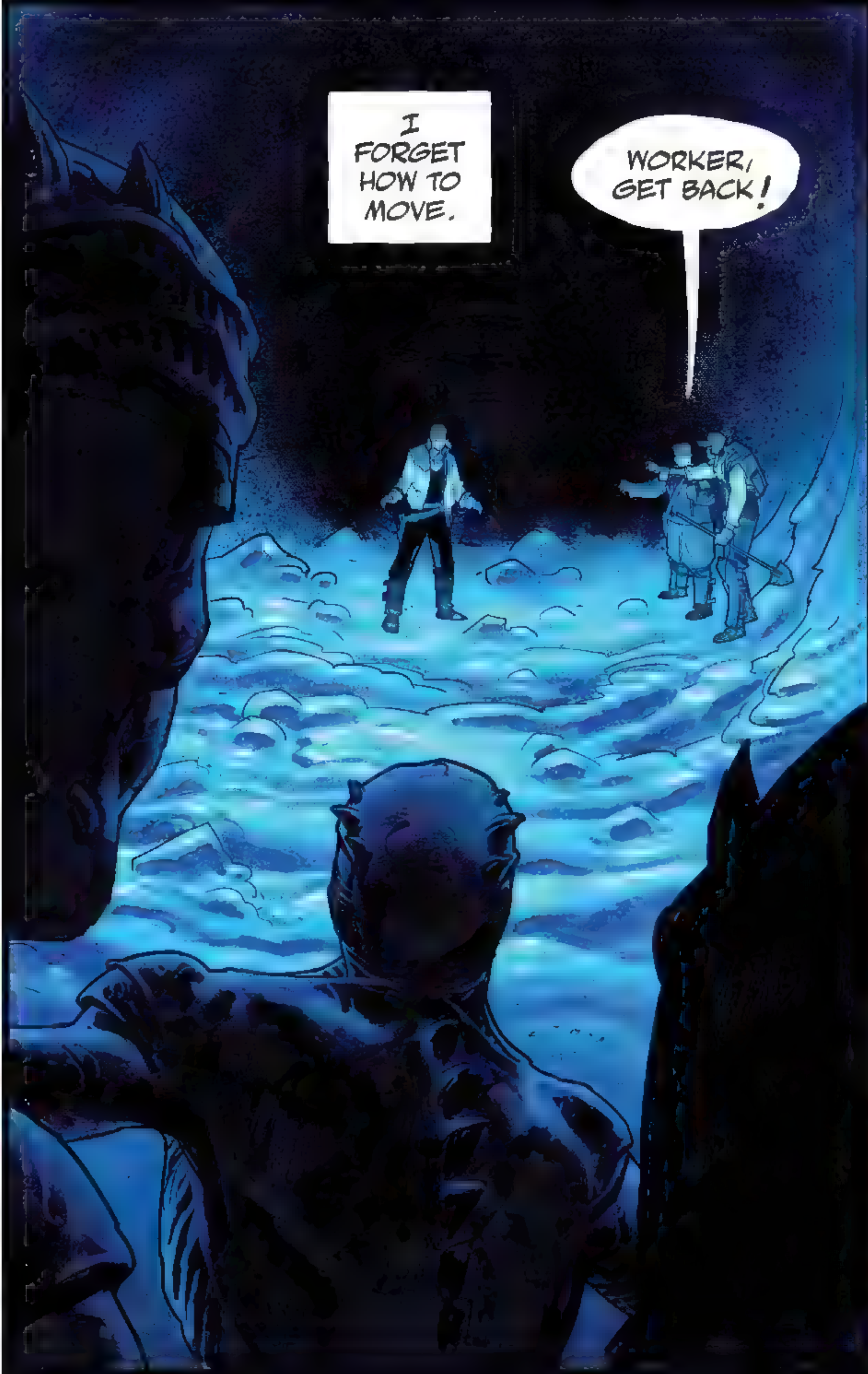


THAT CHEMICAL
AGAIN. PULLING
AT MY GUTS.



SOUNDS BEHIND HIM
LIKE A STAMPEDE.





I
FORGET
HOW TO
MOVE.

WORKER,
GET BACK!



KNOW WHAT I'VE
DONE BEFORE
IT HAPPENS.

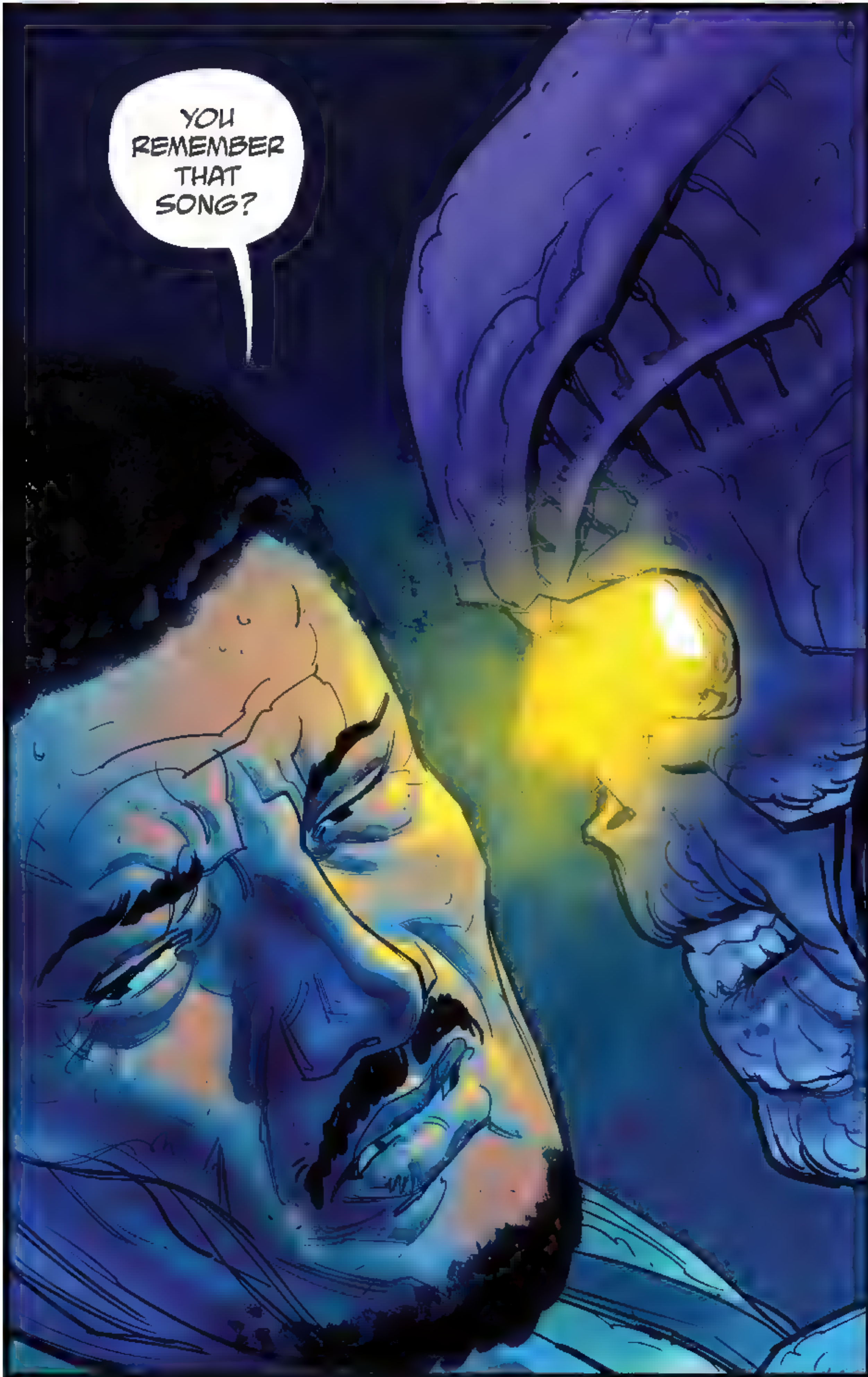


GETS ME
SAFE BUT
NOW HE'S IN
THE LANE.



CLIPS THE
WHEELER'S
LEG AND
GETS ITS
ATTENTION.

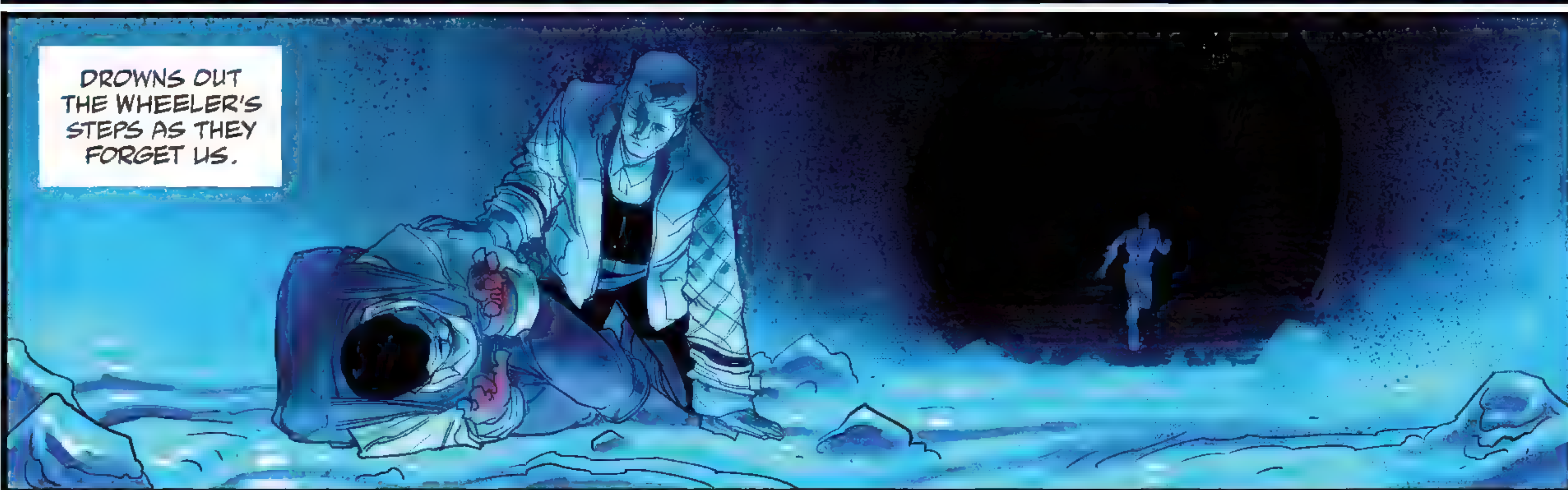
NO!
LEAVE HIM
BE, PLEASE,
GOD...



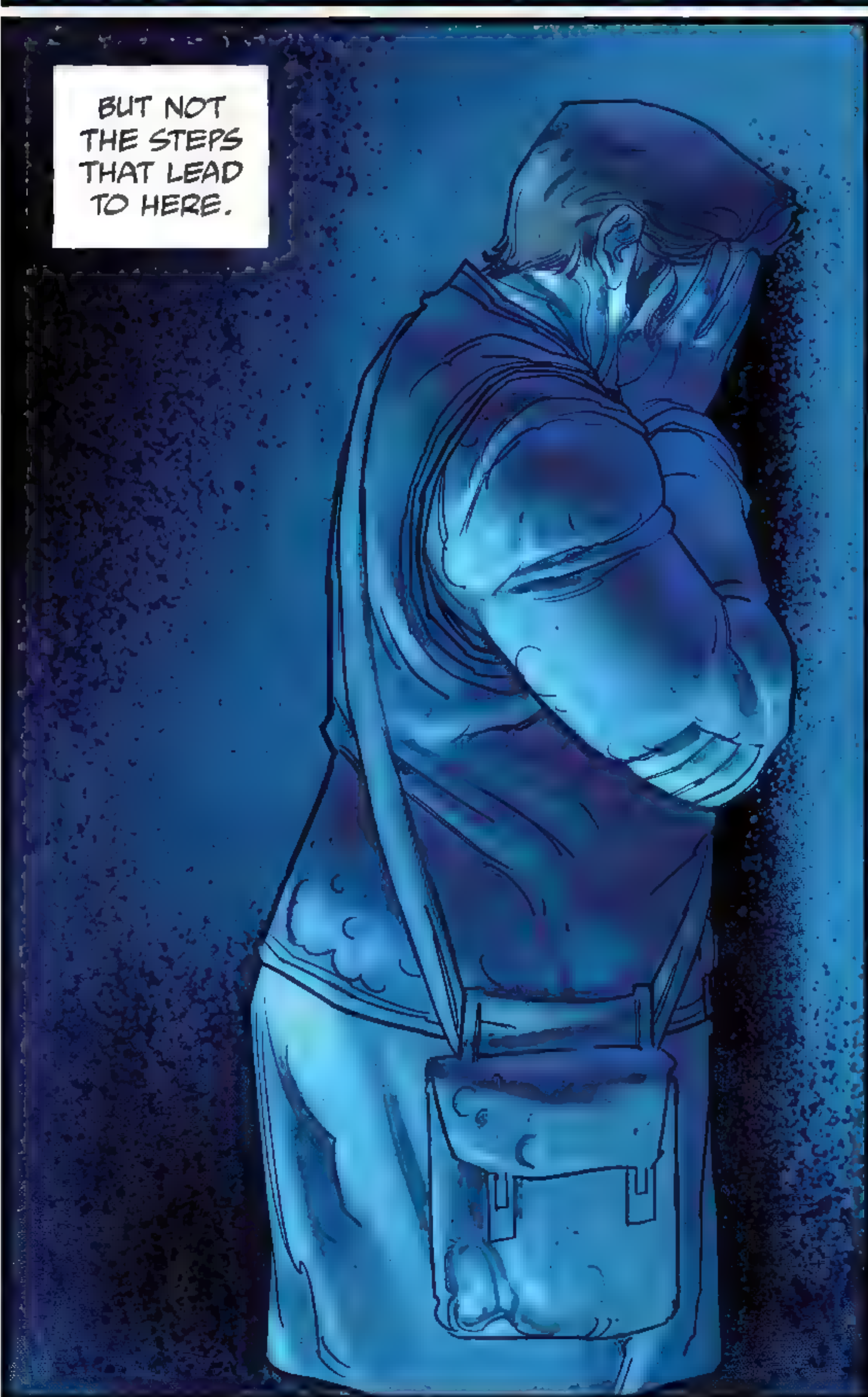
THE
SOUND
FILLS THE
CAVE.



DROWNS OUT
THE WHEELER'S
STEPS AS THEY
FORGET US.



BUT NOT
THE STEPS
THAT LEAD
TO HERE.



OR WHERE
I FEEL
THEM
PULLING
ME.



CAN YOU
HEAR ME?
WE'RE GONNA
GO HOME. JUST
LISTEN TO MY
VOICE.

SHE SINGS SOFT ALL THE WAY
TO THE TOP. HER BREATH
COMES IN AND OUT LIKE WAVES
THAT CRACK AS SHE WHIMPERS.



WHEELERS CAME
OUT THE BACK END OF
THE SYSTEM, RUNNING LIKE
FIRE AND STAINED WITH
WHAT I HOPE AIN'T BLOOD.
IS THAT CHARLIE?



SOMEBODY
GET THE SHERIFF
HERE. DON'T MAKE
IT LOUD.



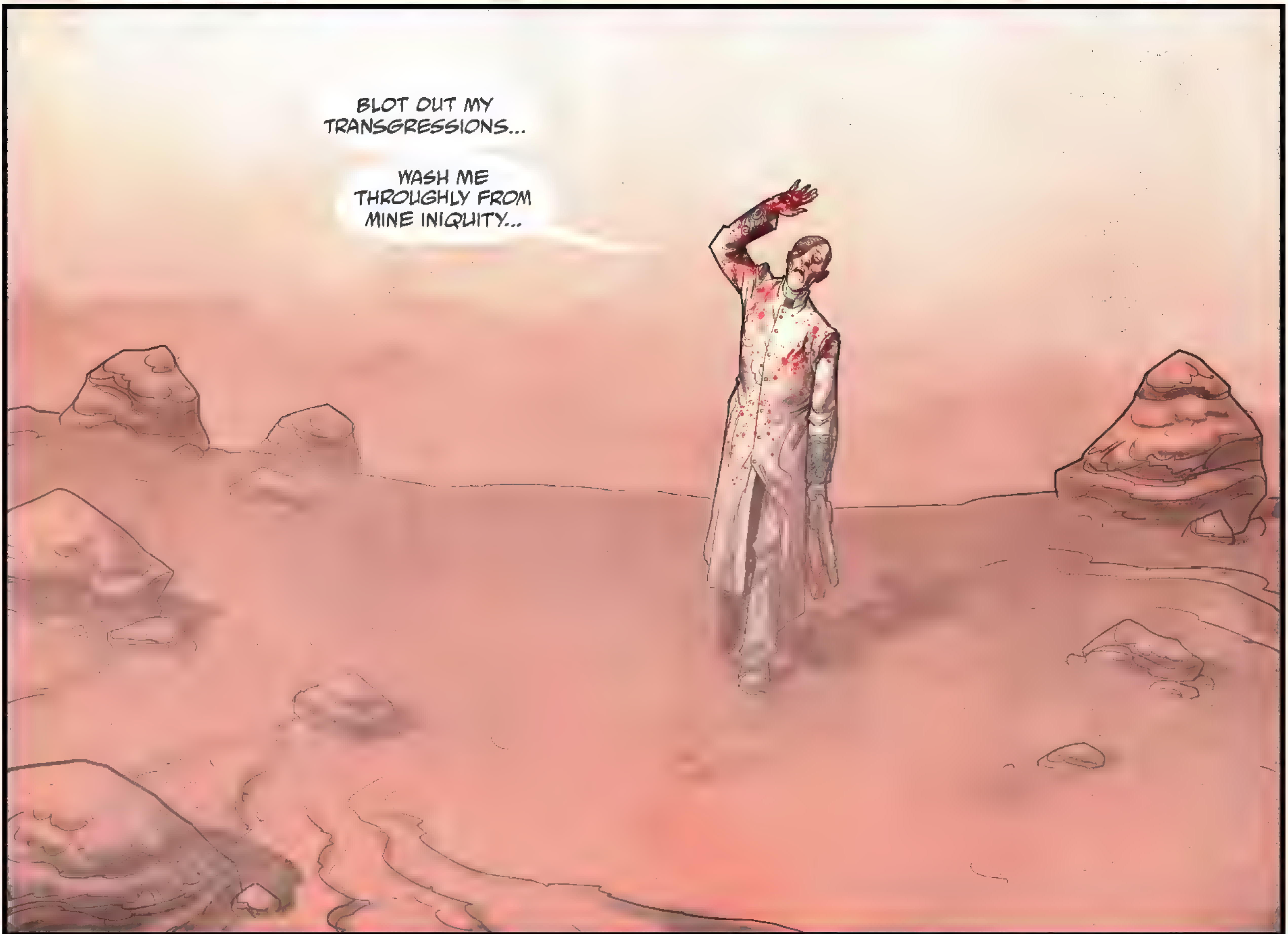
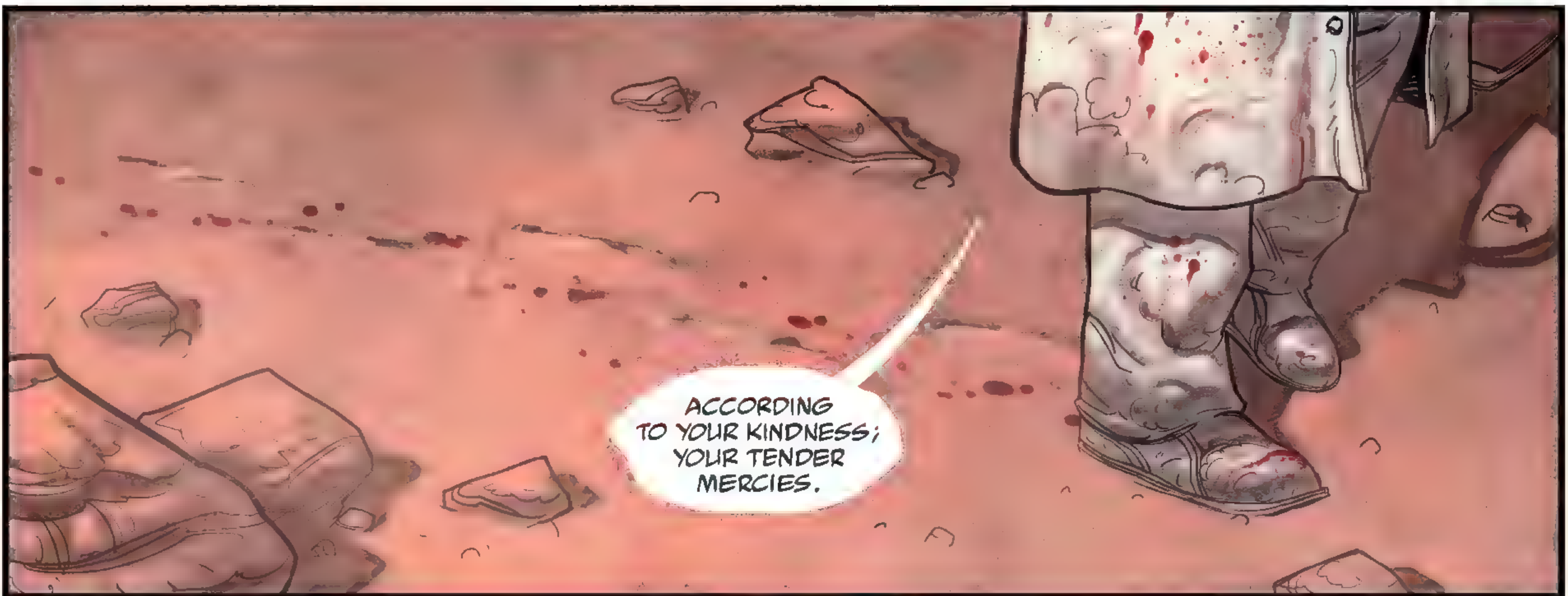
SHE SINGS
'TIL SHE'S
GASPING
FOR AIR,
CHOKING.

I TRY TO CATCH
HER EYES, BUT
SHE JUST
STARES AT HIS
HANDS.



"HAVE
MERCY
UPON ME,
O GOD."









CHAPTER 4
AN UNDERSTANDING

"I STOOD THERE IN BLOOD. MINE
AND HIS. HIS EYES COLD WITH
FEAR, STARING OUT AT NOTHING.

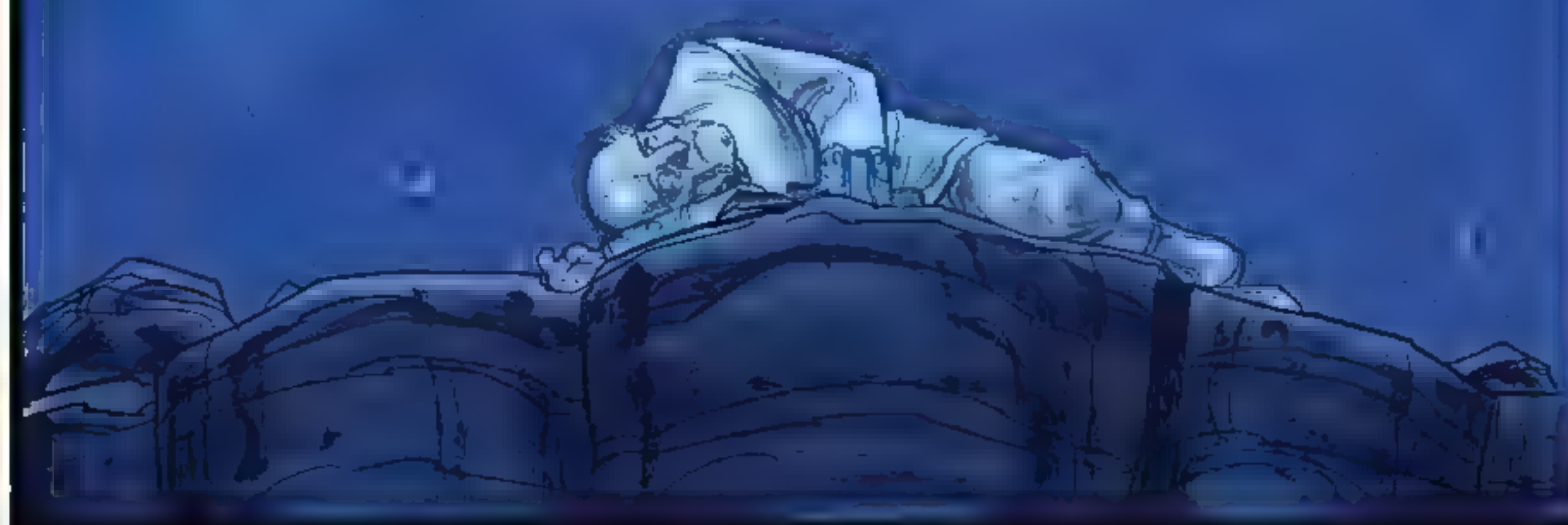


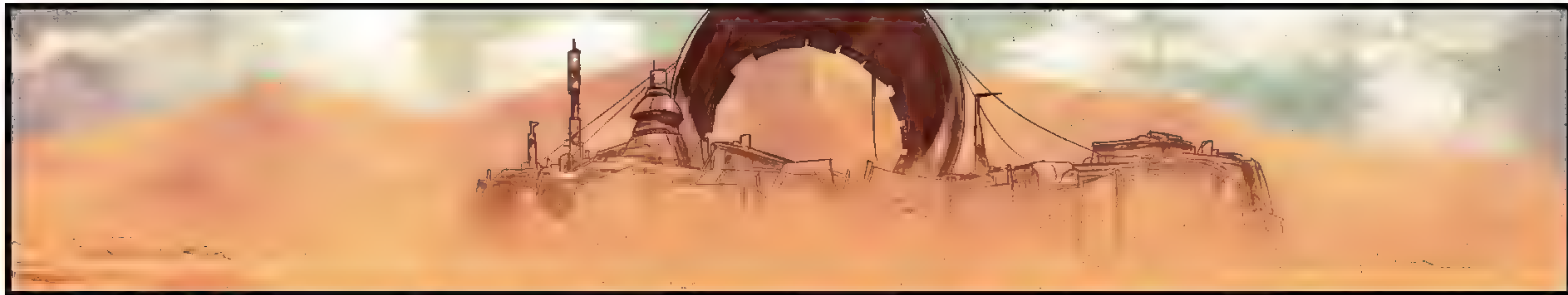
"I WALKED
UNTIL I COULD
NOT MOVE AND
I TRIED THERE
TO SPEAK BUT
THERE WAS NO
SOUND.

"I
LISTENED.
FOR THE
ALMIGHTY
TO SAY OR
TO STRIKE.



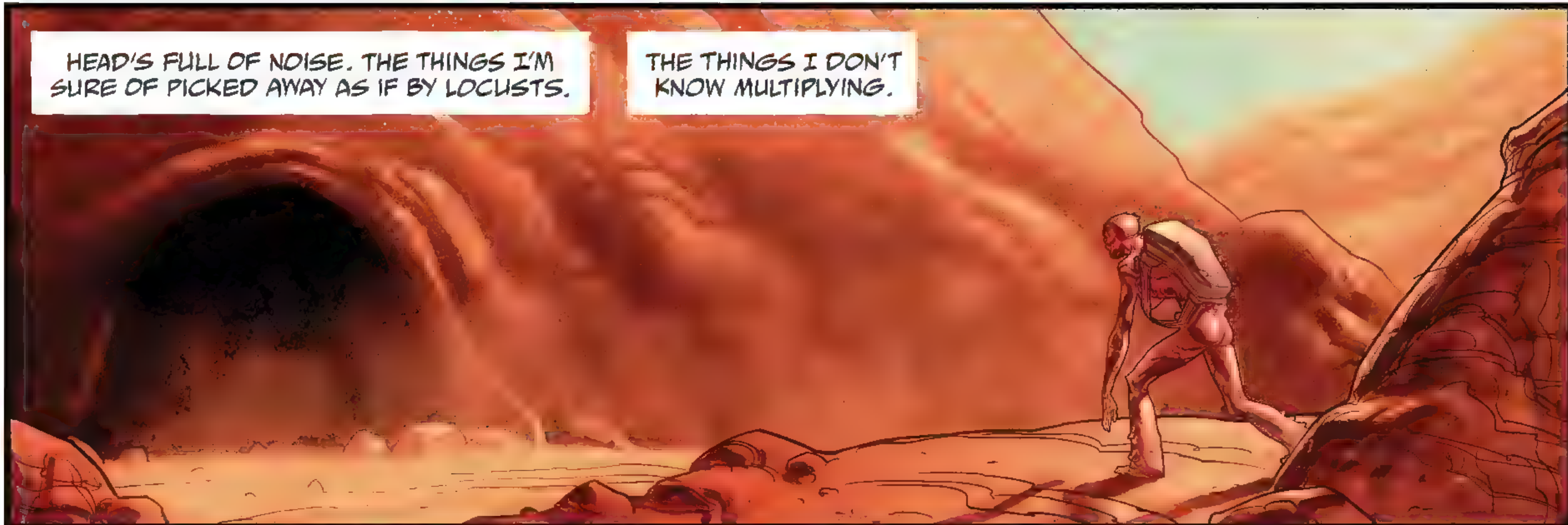
"TWO DAYS
OR A
HUNDRED
YEARS."





HEAD'S FULL OF NOISE. THE THINGS I'M SURE OF PICKED AWAY AS IF BY LOCUSTS.

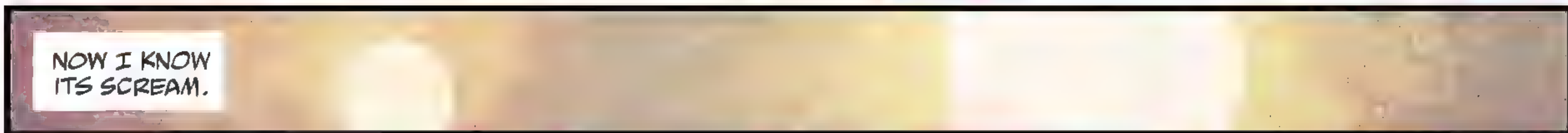
THE THINGS I DON'T KNOW MULTIPLYING.



BUT I KNOW THIS.



NOW I KNOW ITS SCREAM.

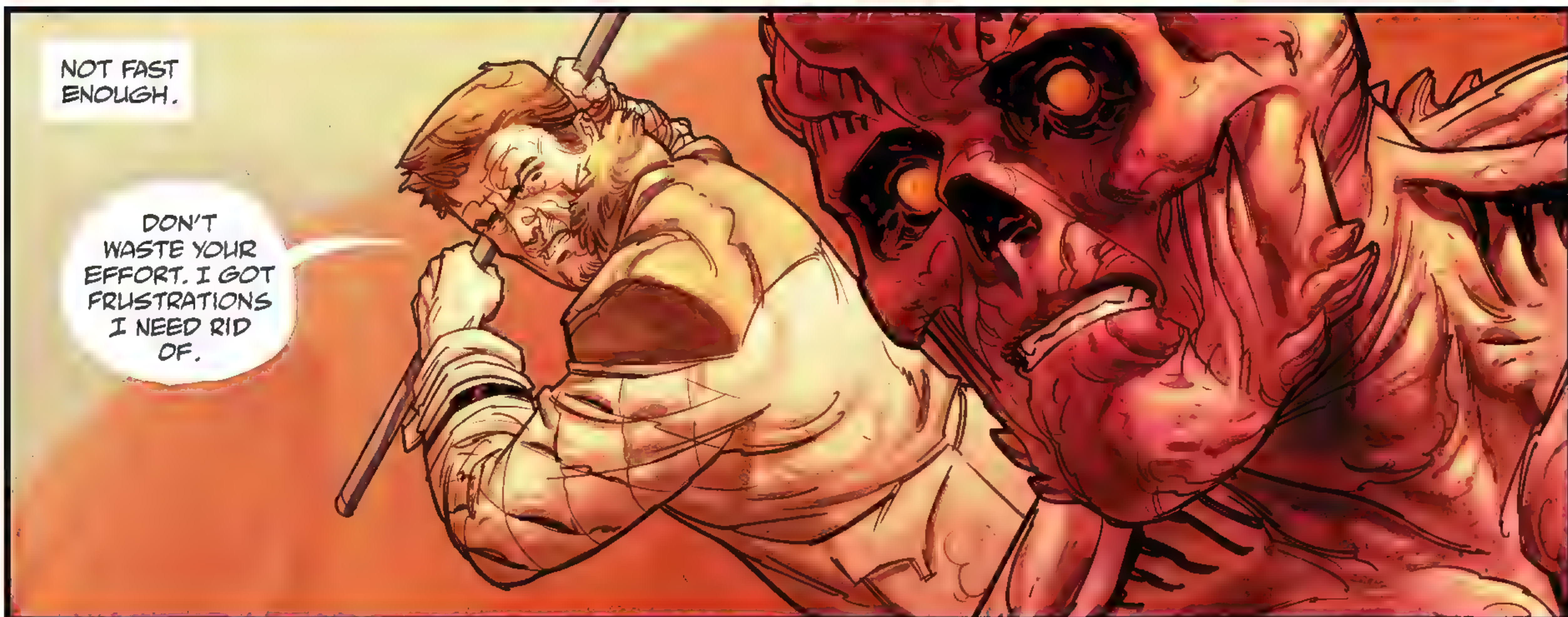


HOW FAST IT MOVES WITH ONE GOOD LEG.



NOT FAST ENOUGH.

DON'T WASTE YOUR EFFORT. I GOT FRUSTRATIONS I NEED RID OF.





THIS
KINDA DAY,
RIGHT?



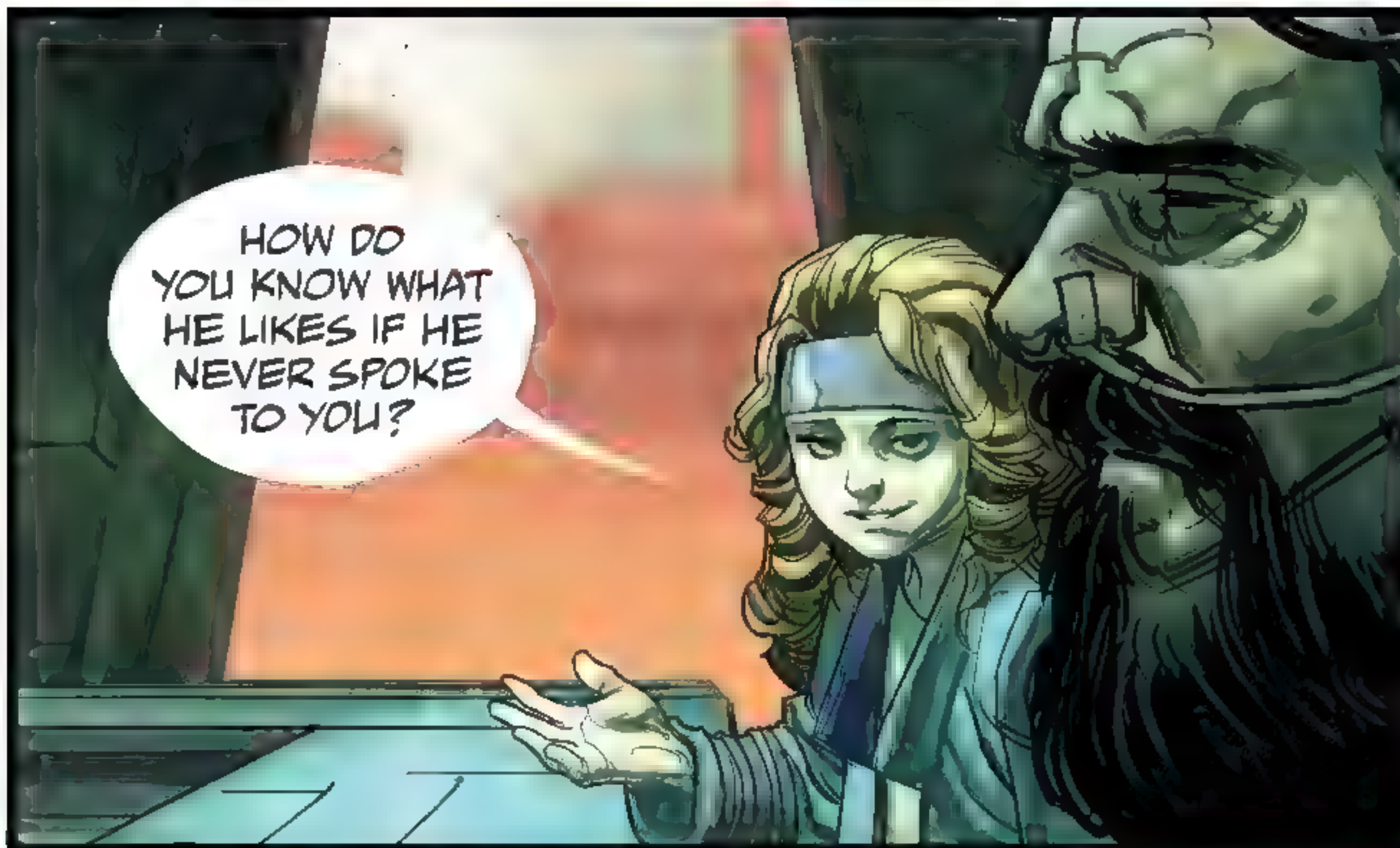
YOU
MIND MY
SITTIN'
HERE?

LIMA.

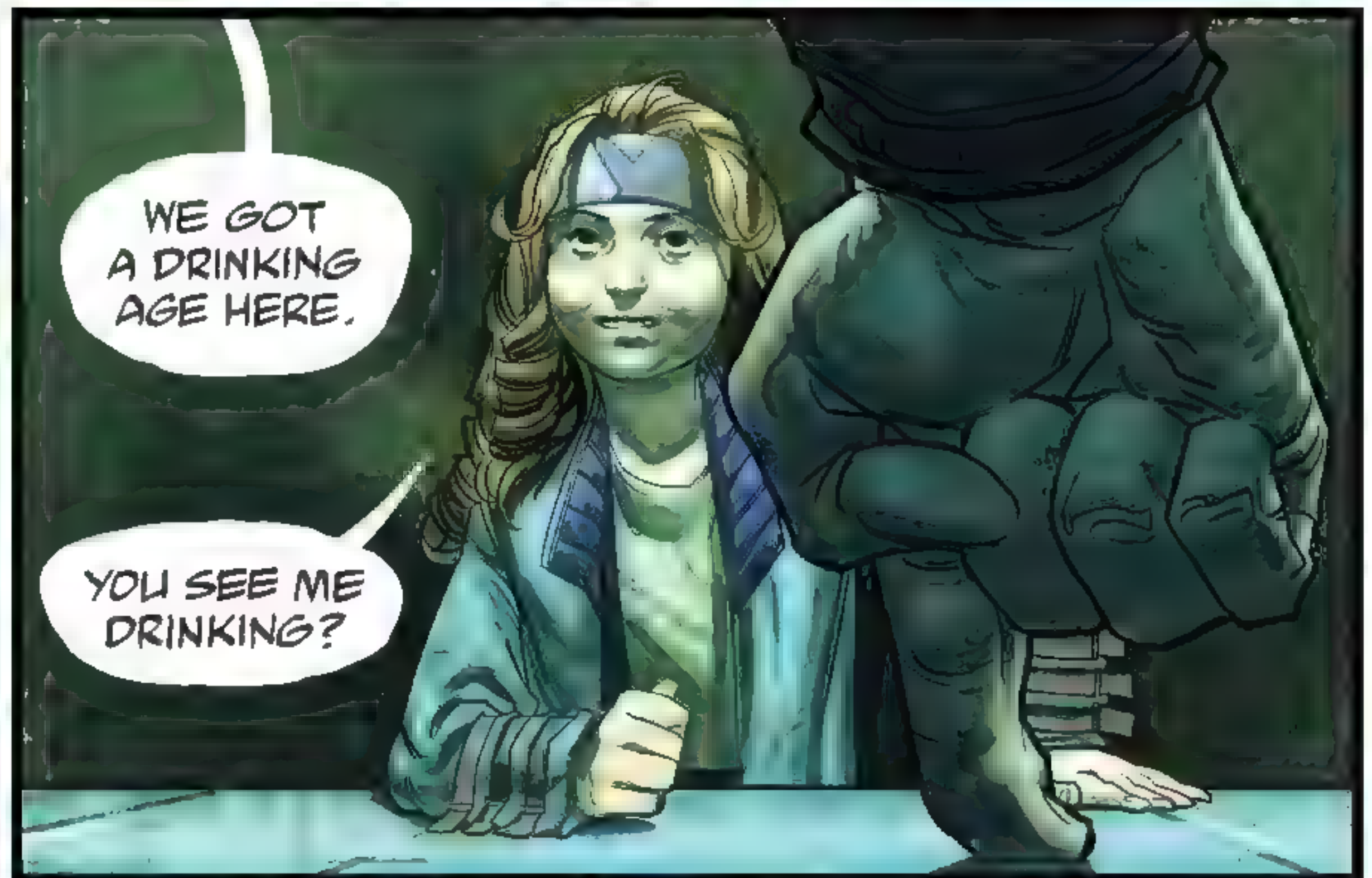
BIG.



MR. EMMERICH
DON'T ENJOY
CONVERSATION.

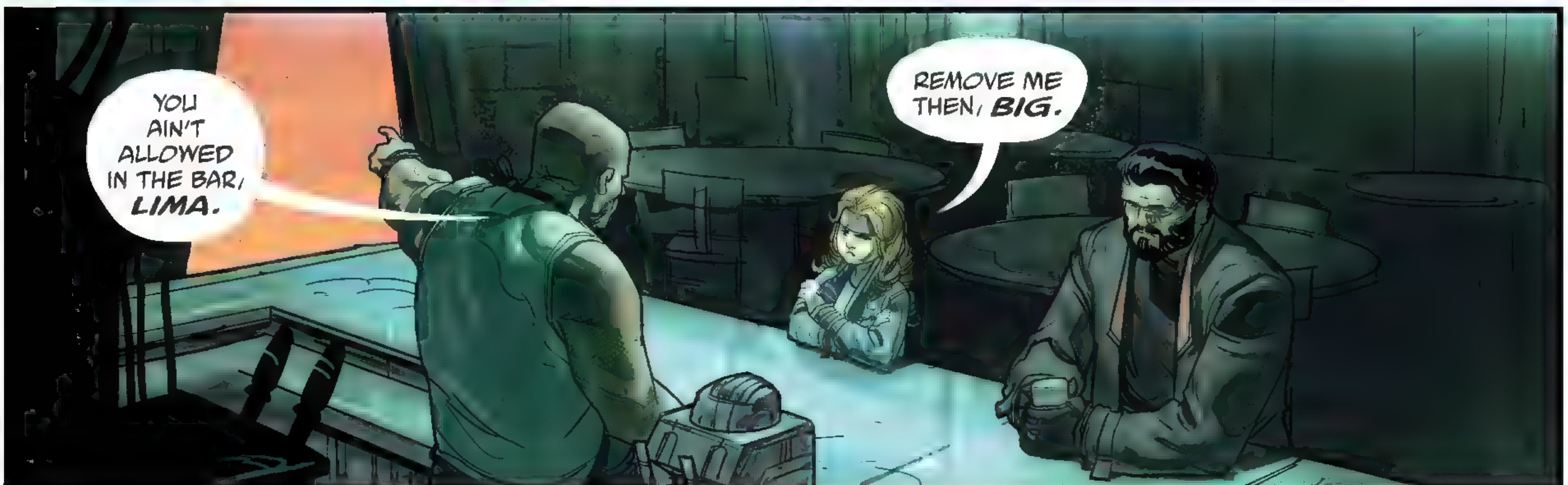


HOW DO
YOU KNOW WHAT
HE LIKES IF HE
NEVER SPOKE
TO YOU?



WE GOT
A DRINKING
AGE HERE.

YOU SEE ME
DRINKING?



YOU
AIN'T
ALLOWED
IN THE BAR,
LIMA.

REMOVE ME
THEN, **BIG.**



ONE
OF THESE
DAYS...

BUT
NOT **THIS**
ONE.



WELL,
LOOKIT
YOU NOW.
I'D HAVE
SWORE THAT
FACE WAS
FROZEN
DEAD.



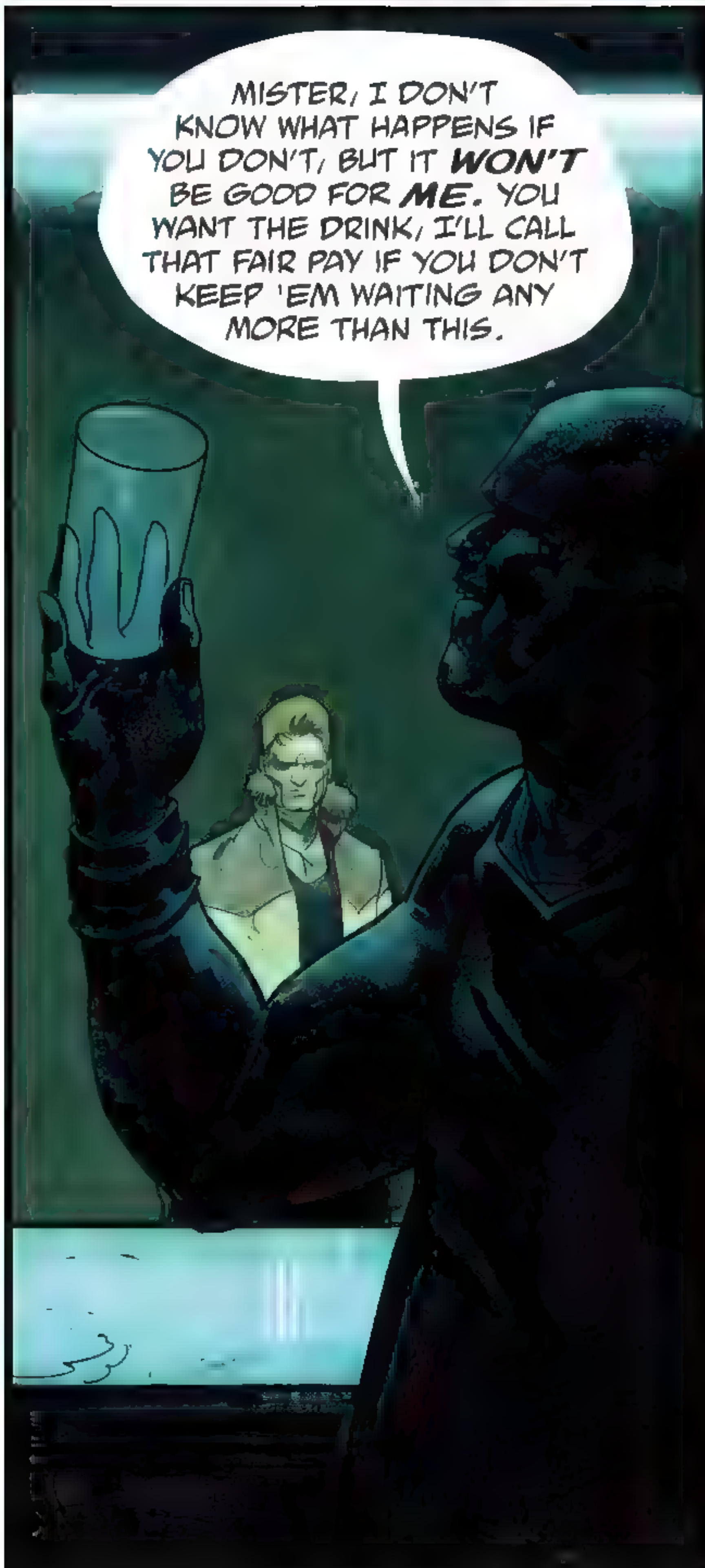
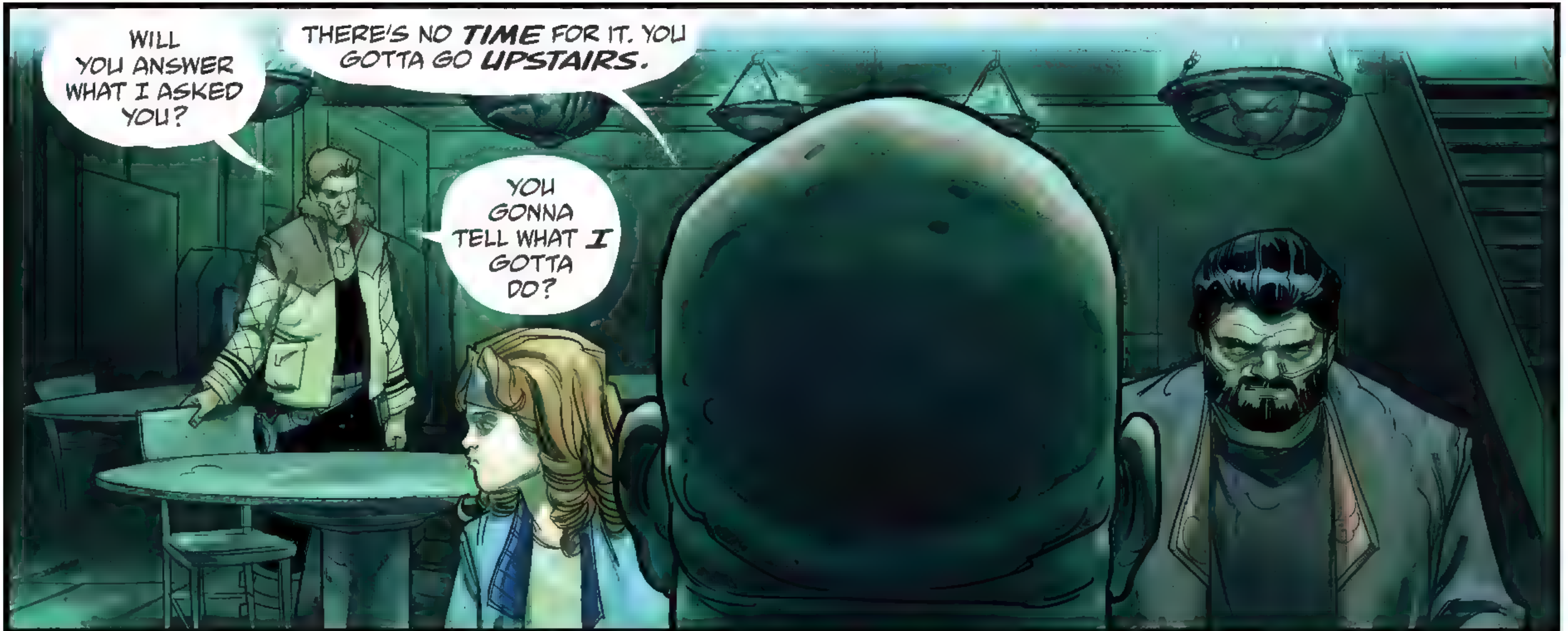
NOW,
THAT'S MORE
FAMILIAR.

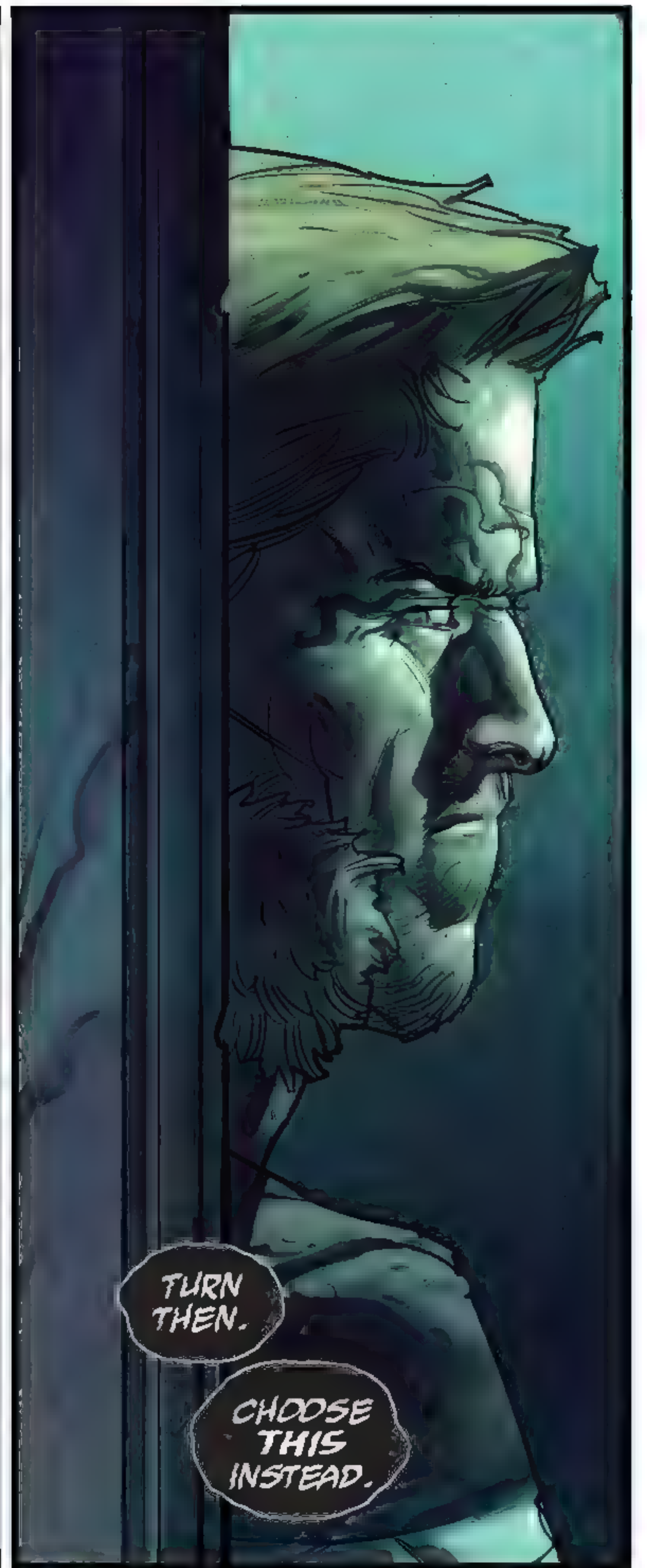
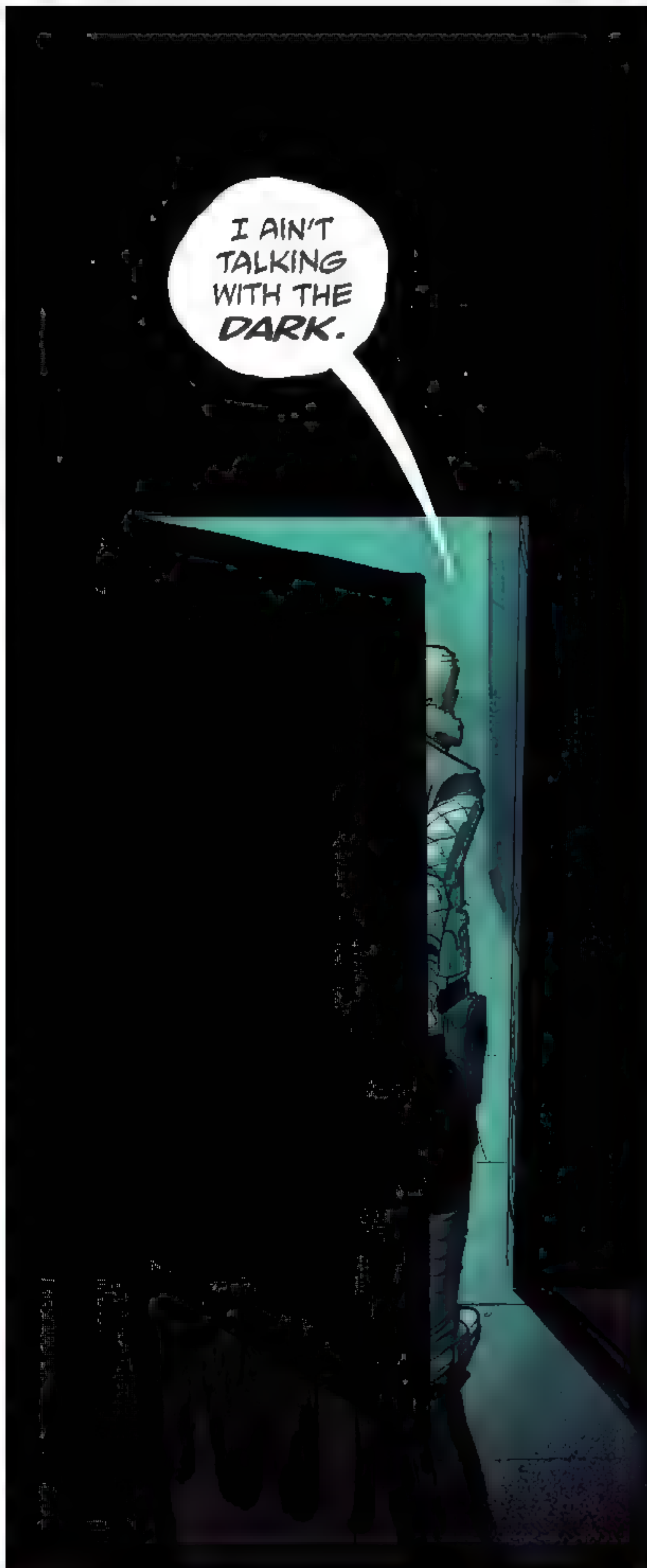
BOY
DOWN THE WAY
CALLED YOU "BELL
EMMEROCK" TWO
DAYS BACK. THOUGHT
THAT WAS PRETTY
GOOD.



BUT **HIS**
NICKNAME'S
"SWEATY", SO I GUESS
YOU'RE STILL UP
AHEAD A BIT.









TRY TO FOCUS,
BUT MY GUTS TWIST
INSIDE ME.

DO I
SIT?

OR STAND OR LAY
UPON THE GROUND.
WHICHEVER SUITS YOUR
EASE. THAT WE MIGHT
FOCUS ON AN UNDER-
STANDING.



WHAT'RE
WE TO UNDER-
STAND?

WHO
YOU THINK
YOURSELF
TO BE.



WHO *I*
THINK *I* AM?
YOU ASKED
ME HERE. I
DON'T KNOW
YOU.

YOU
BROUGHT
HARM TODAY
UPON ONE OF
MINE

I THINK
YOU HEARD IT
WRONG.



NOT
HEARD.

I FELT YOUR...
"FRUSTRATIONS"

THE VICTIM...
WE ARE DIFFERENT
VERSIONS OF THE
SAME DESIGN.



YOU AIN'T
A WHEELER.

I DID NOT
NAME YOUR
PREY.



...

WE HAVE NO
NAME FOR
OURSELVES. BUT
WE ARE ALWAYS
TOGETHER.

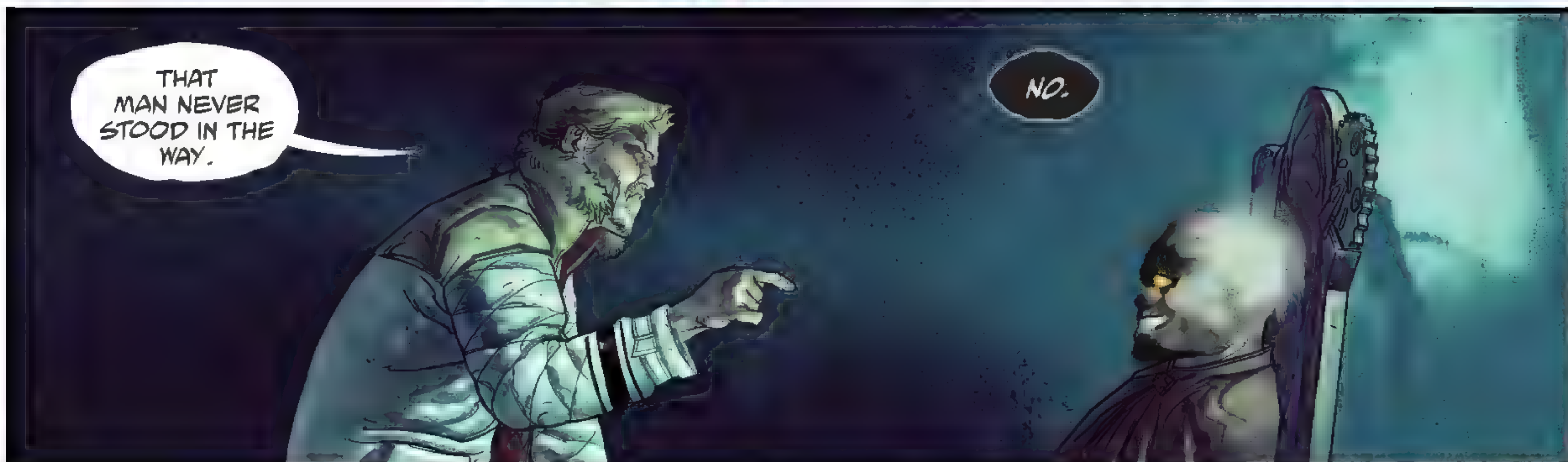
BELOW
AND ABOVE,
DIFFERENT
SIDES OF A
PURPOSE.



WHAT
PURPOSE,
THEN--TO BREAK
AN OLD MAN'S
HANDS? TO BURN
HIS FACE WHILE HIS
WIFE SEES IT
HAPPEN?

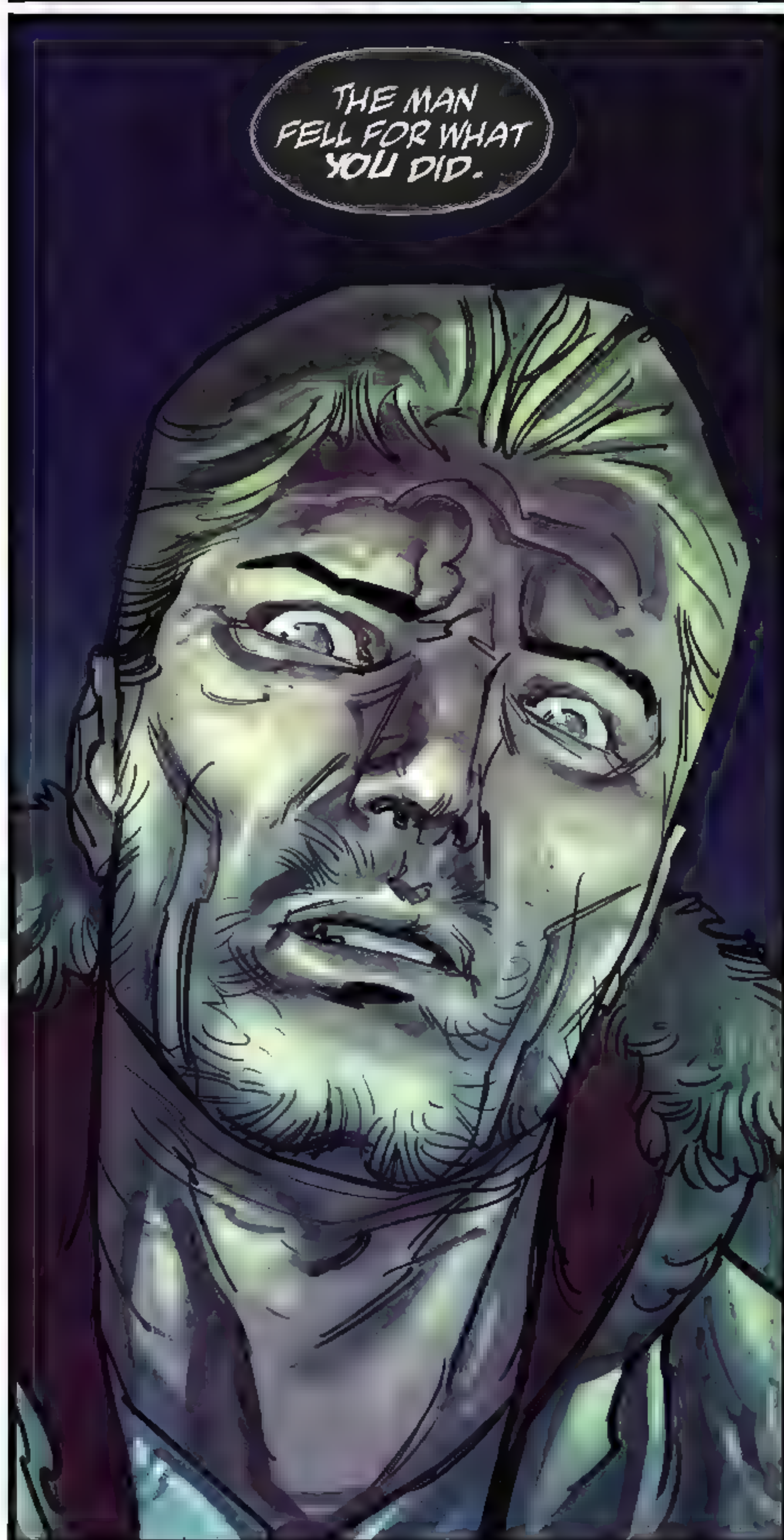
TO BRING
BALANCE.

THERE ARE
EDICTS HERE. MADE
CLEAR TO EVERY FORM
WHO WALKS BELOW THE
SKIN OF THIS WORLD. THE
FIRST THAT PROGRESS
MUST BE
UNOBSTRUCTED.



THAT
MAN NEVER
STOOD IN THE
WAY.

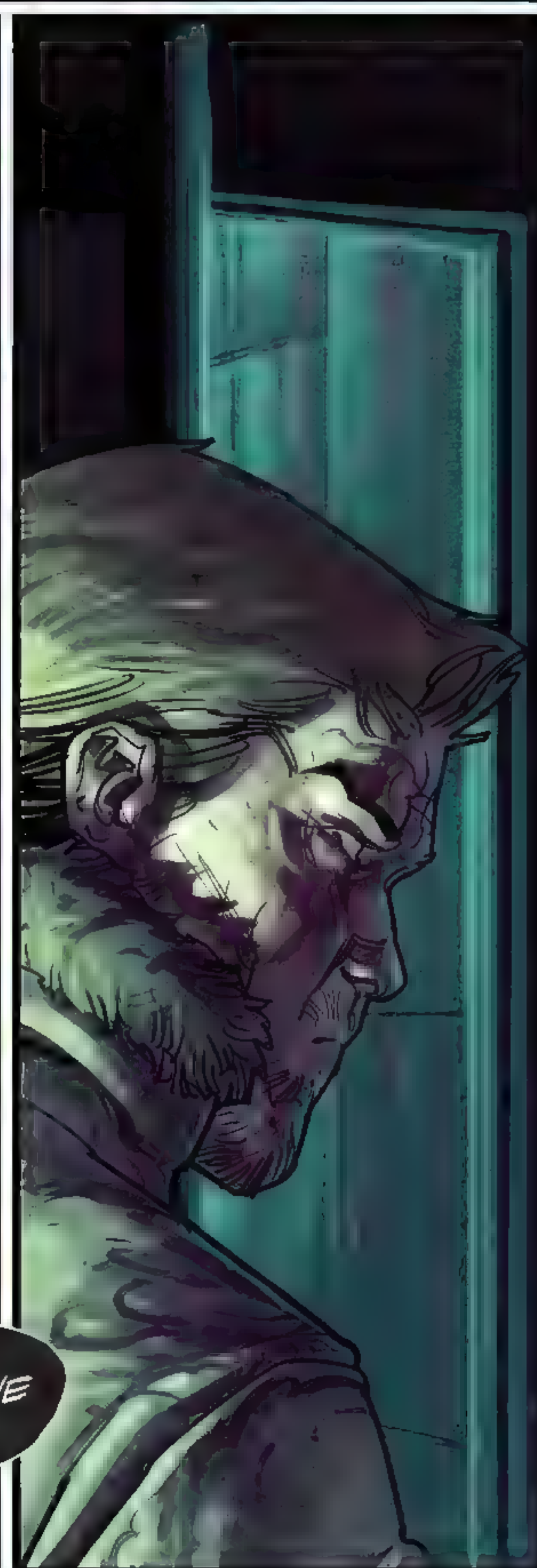
NO.



THE MAN
FELL FOR WHAT
YOU DID.



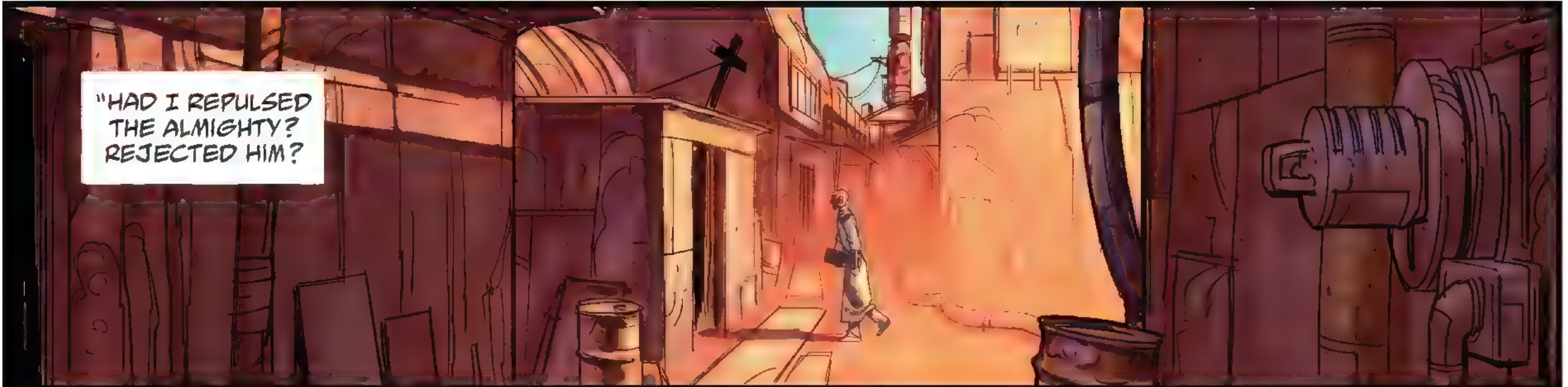
YOU
MAY GO NOW. WE
UNDERSTAND.



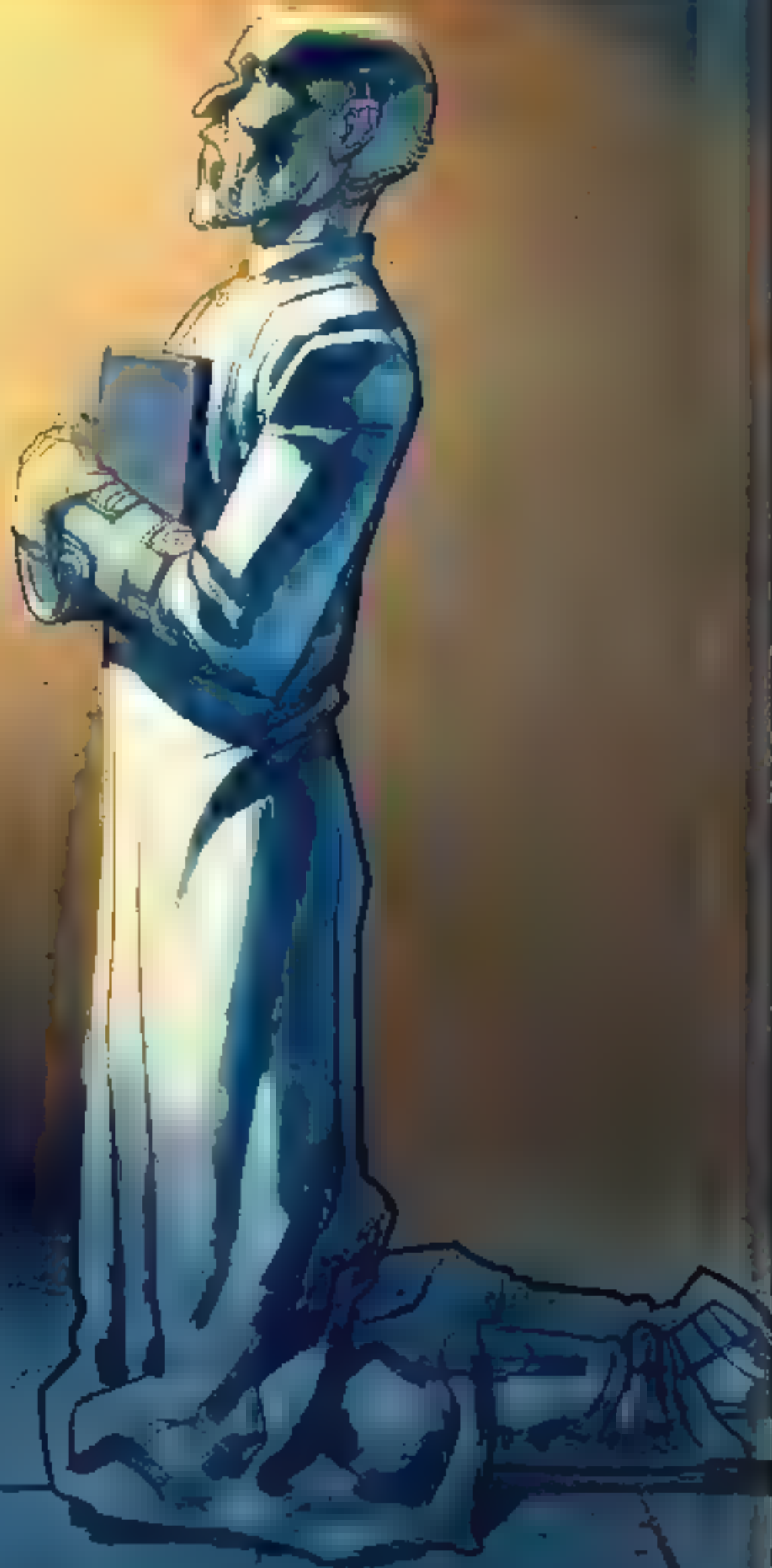
"EVERY DAY SINCE
THEN STILL A
SILENCE. NO SOUND
FROM ABOVE, NO
CONDEMNATION.



"HAD I REPULSED
THE ALMIGHTY?
REJECTED HIM?



"I SPOKE THE WORDS OF
ABSOLUTION AND RETURNED
THERE TO HIS HAND.

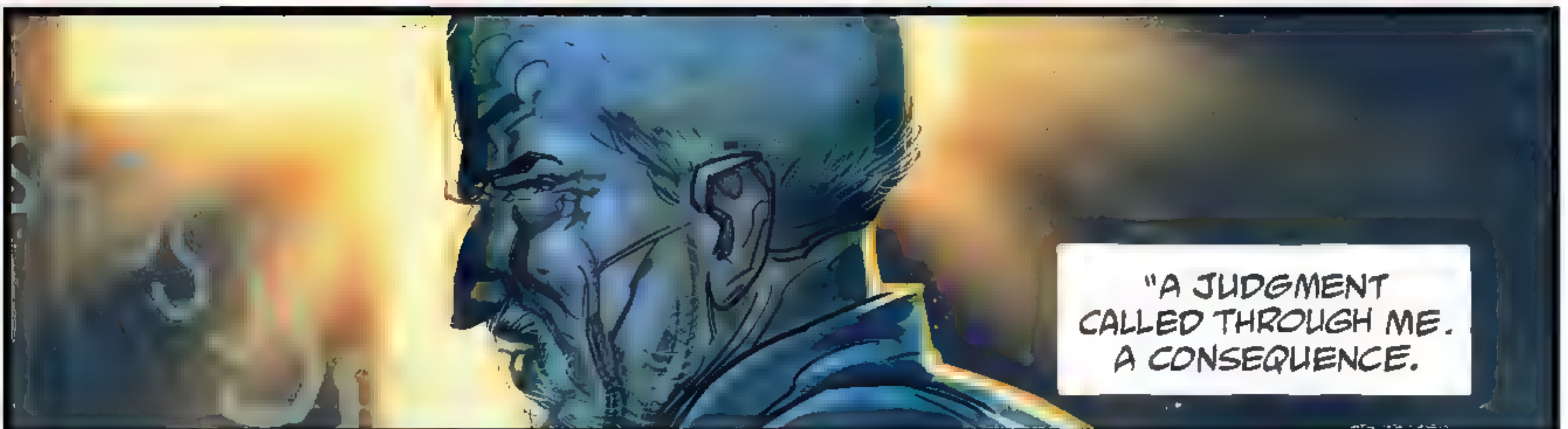


"STILL, HE WAS
QUIET. AS IF
WE'D COME
UPON A SECRET.

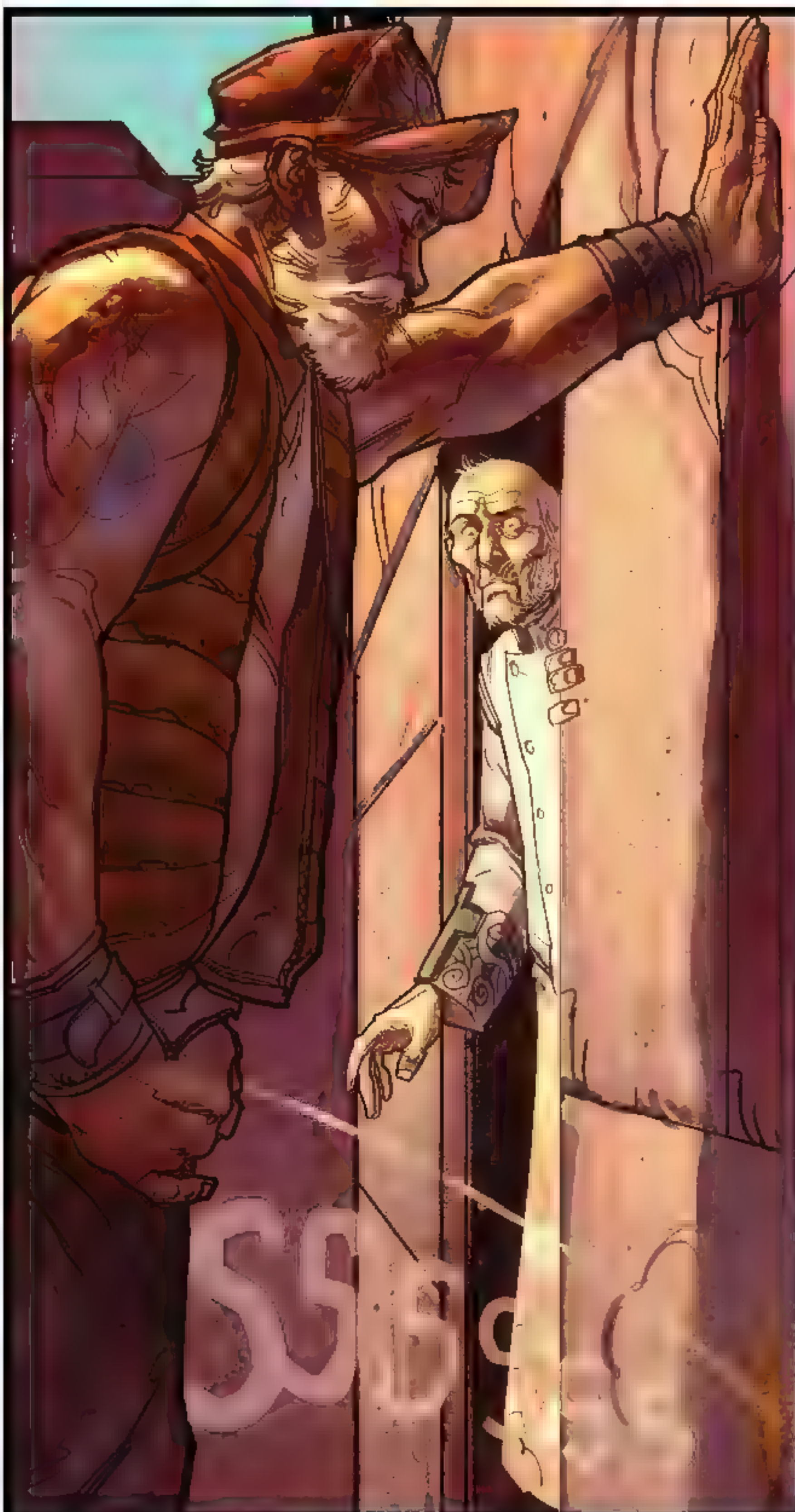
"HIS WILL IMPLIED
NOT WITH WORDS,
BUT WITH AN ADDED
STRENGTH.



"A JUDGMENT
CALLED THROUGH ME.
A CONSEQUENCE.

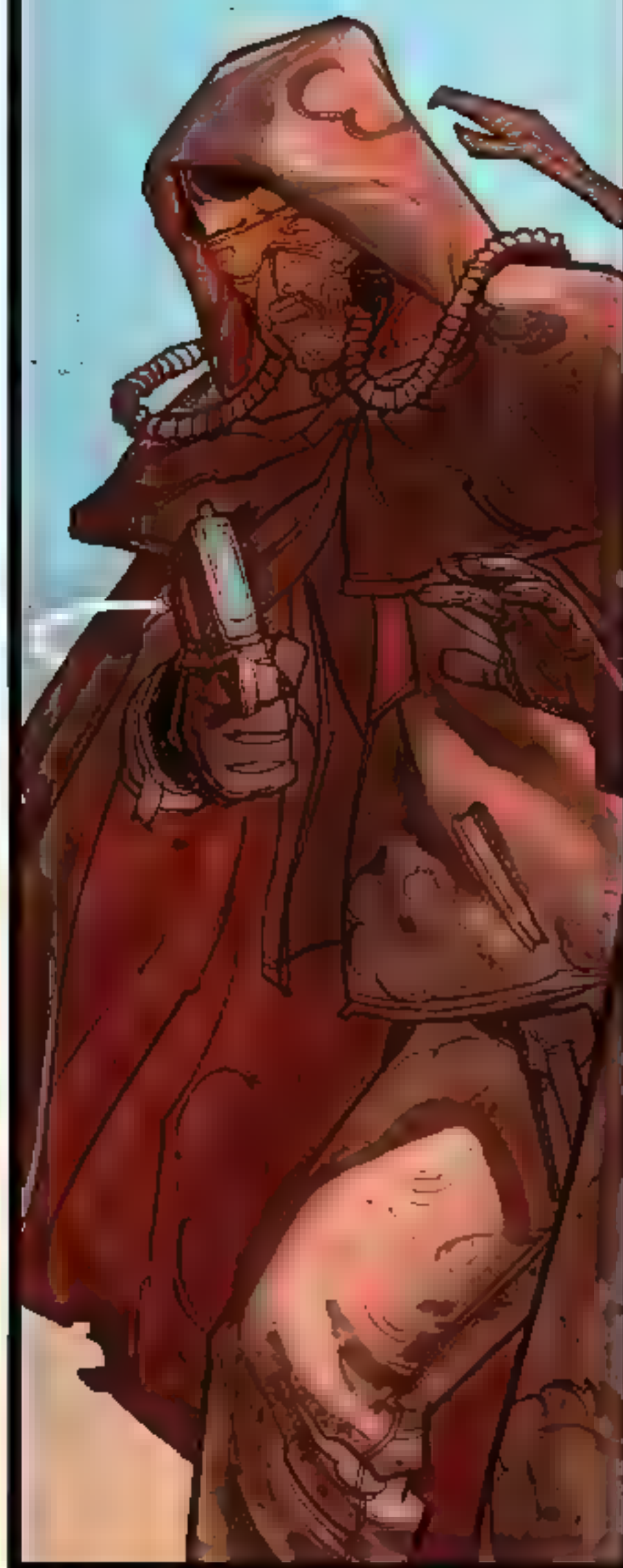


"HE EVEN SENT
ME A *SIGN*."

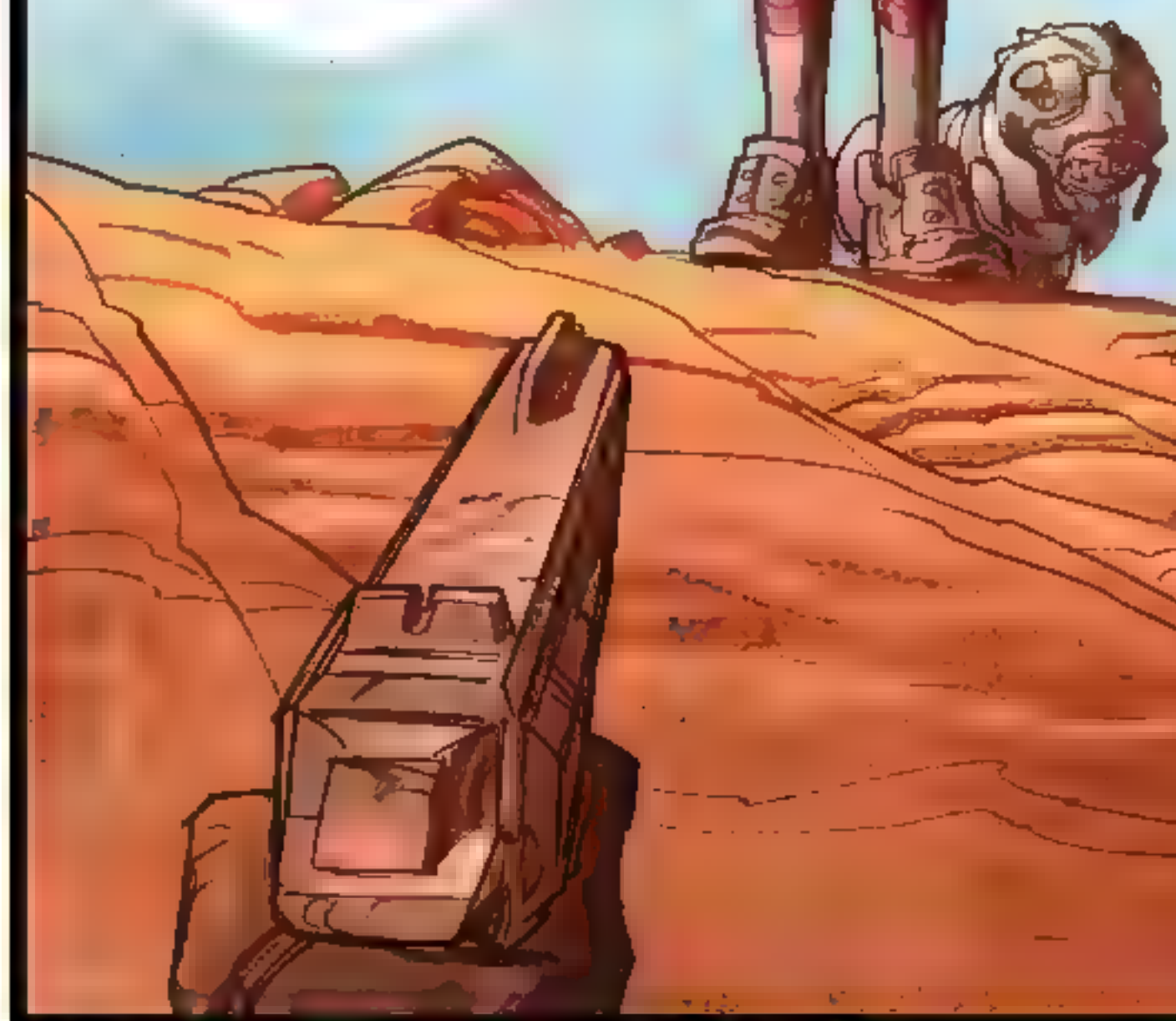


HOW
LONG
NOW?

HOW LONG HAS
PASSED AND
HOW LONG LEFT?



WHO
WERE YOU
EXPECTING
TO HAVE TO
SHOOT?



AND BY
WHAT MATH AIN'T
I WORTHY OF
THE SAME?

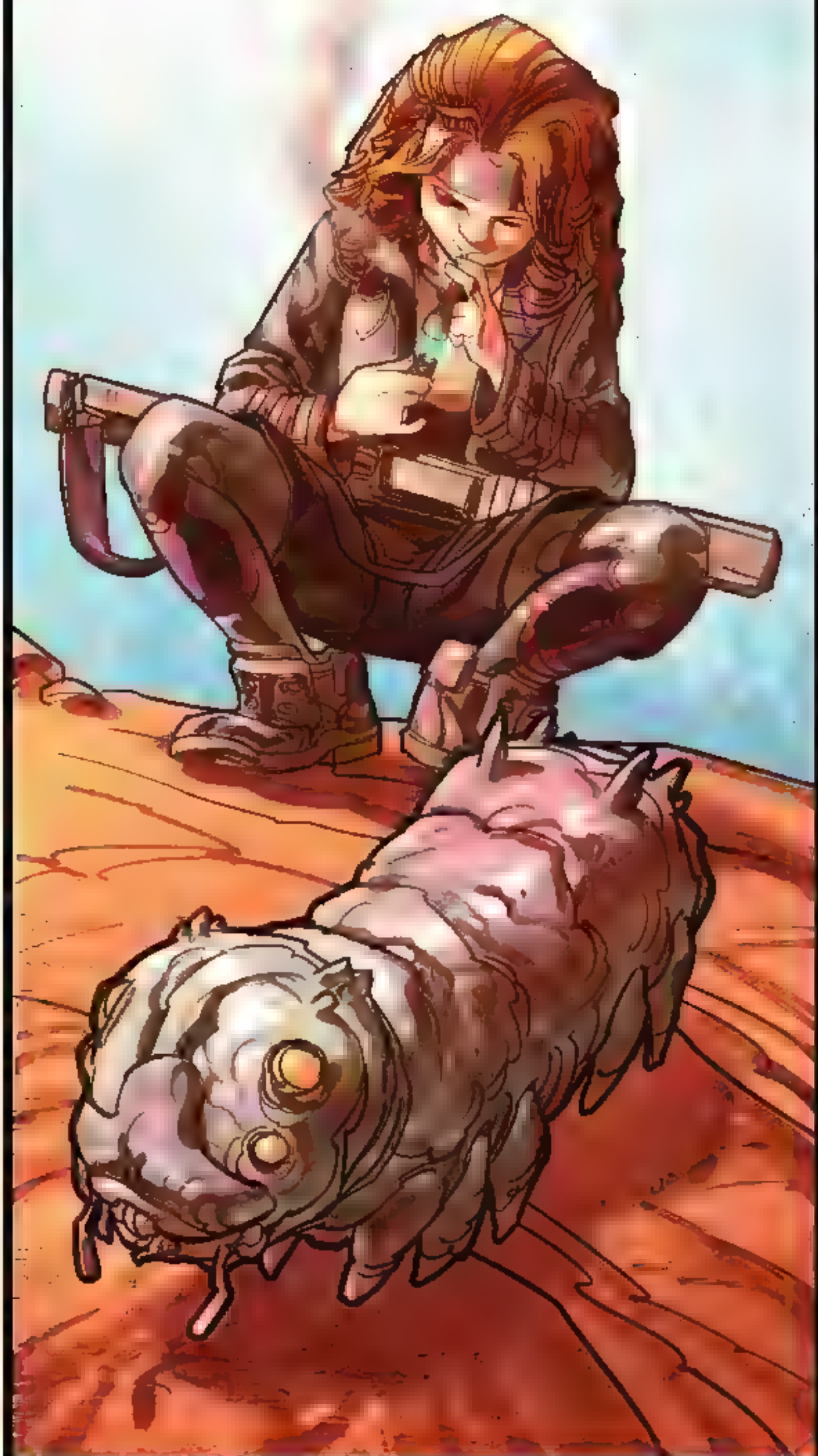


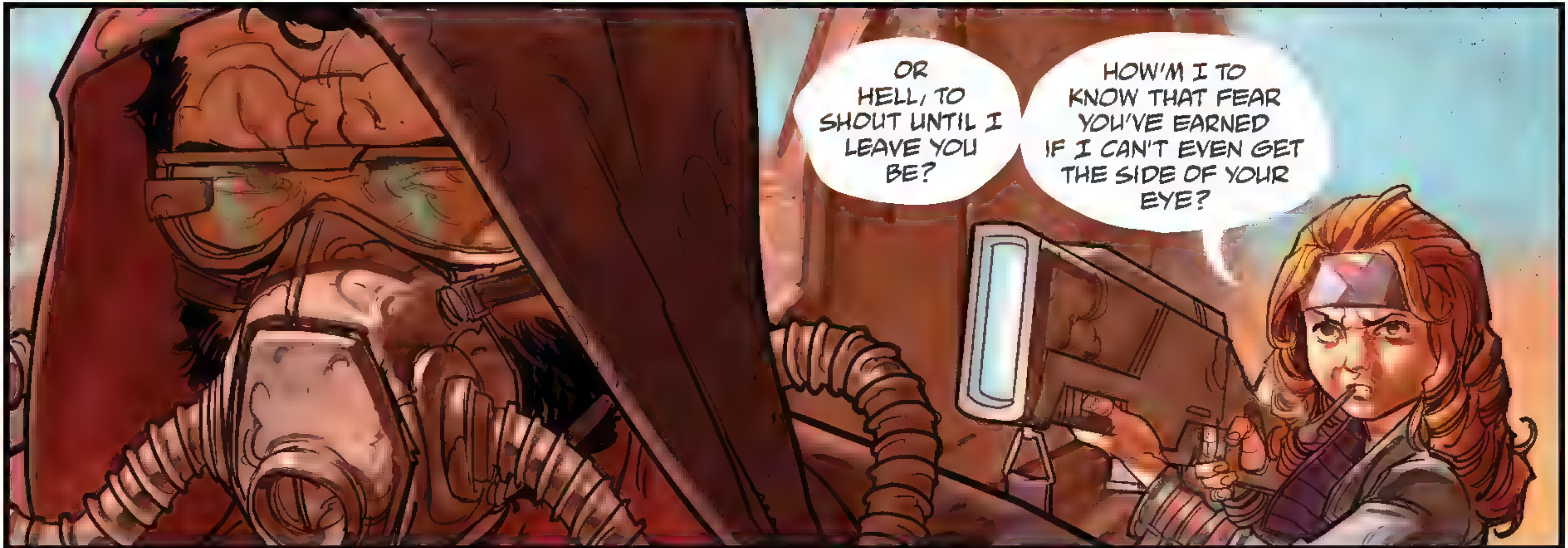
YOU CAN'T
ACKNOWLEDGE
EVEN *HERE* THAT
ANYONE ELSE
EXISTS. EVEN
IN YOUR...

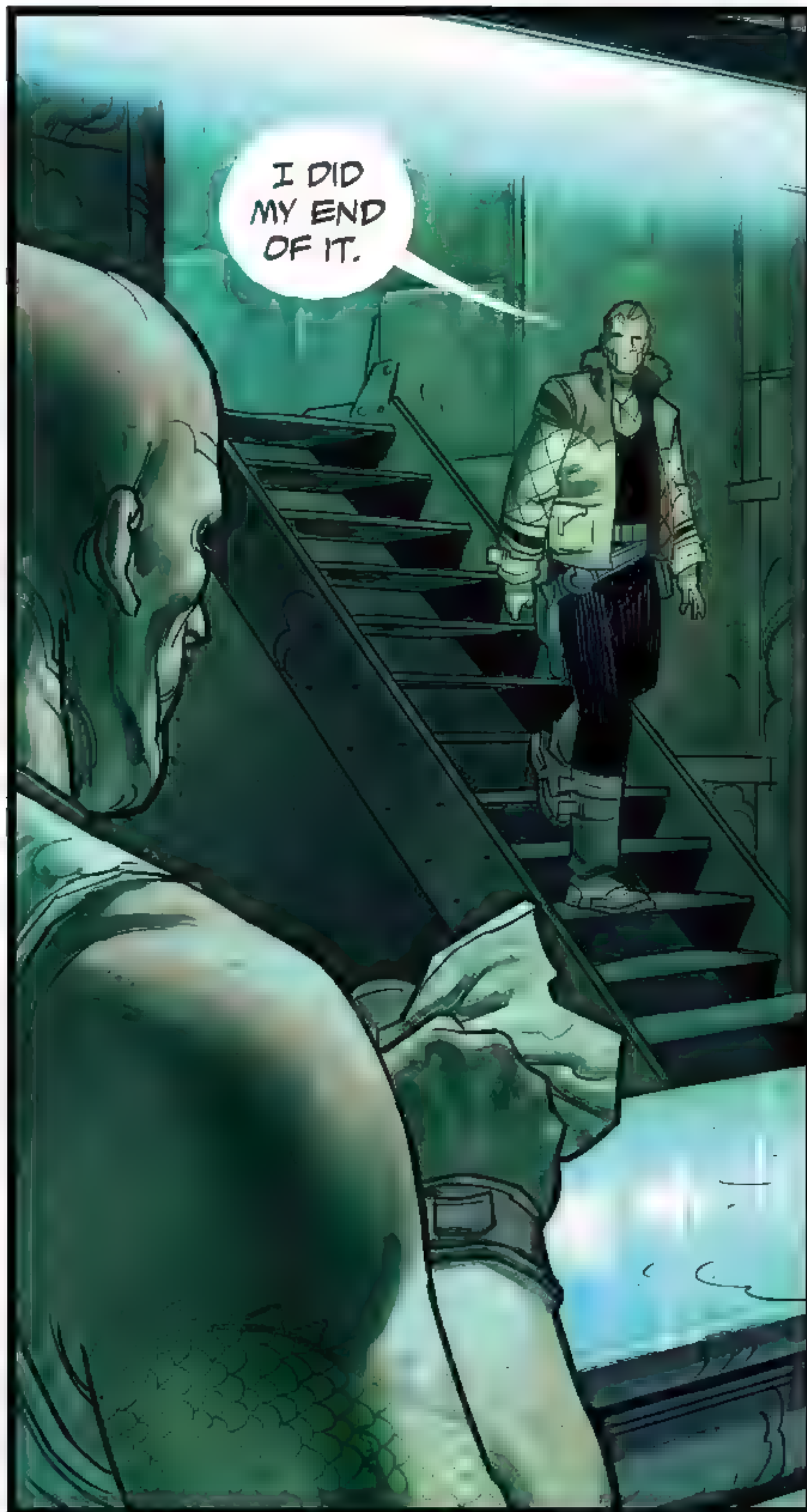
WHATEVER
THIS IS.



NO,
YOU'RE ALL
ALONE NO
MATTER *WHAT*.
YOU AGAINST THE
ACTUAL WORLD,
RIGHT?





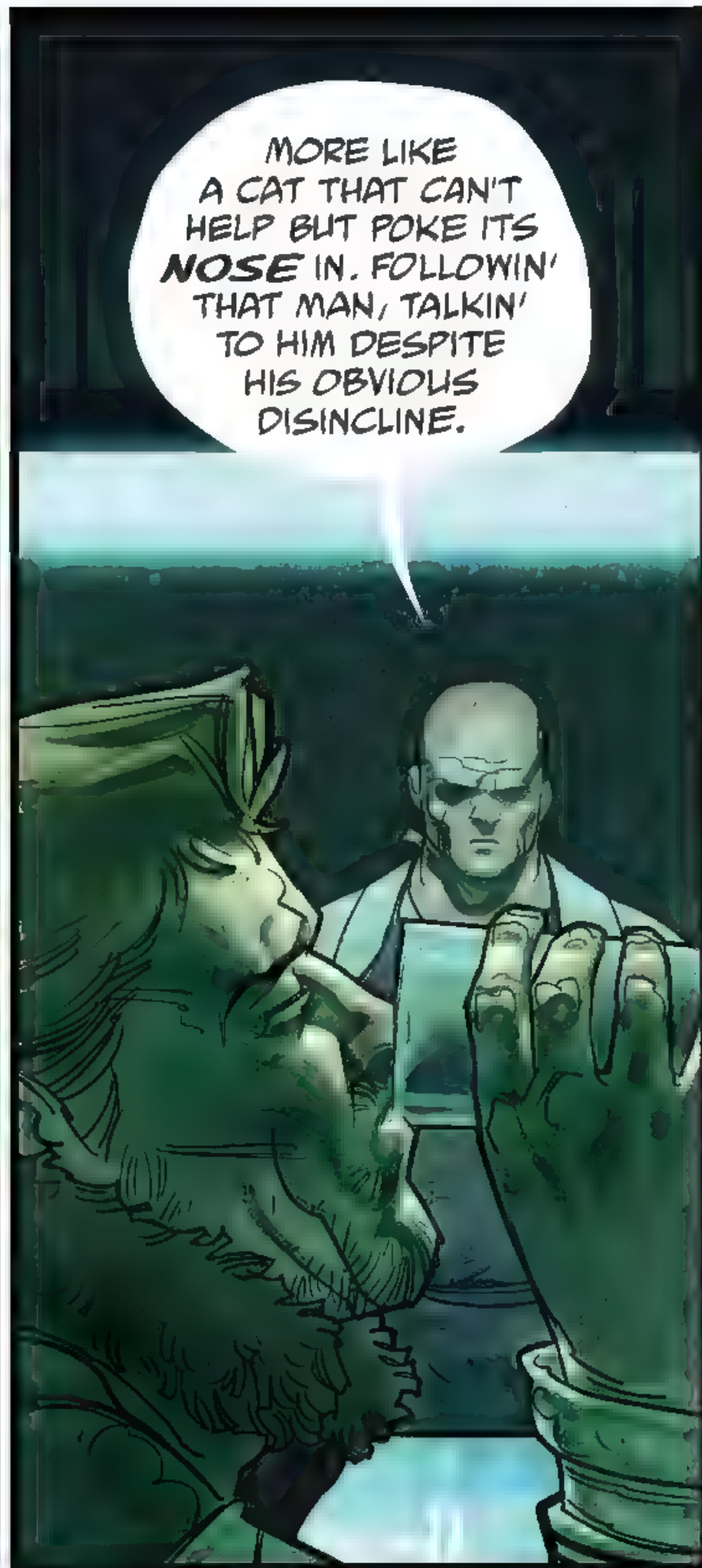


I DID MY END OF IT.



LONG AS YOU AIN'T TRAILING ANOTHER LITTLE PIG-TAILED KILLER, GO ON AND DRINK HERE IN PEACE.

WHO'S SHE, DAUGHTER OF THAT MAN EMMERICH?



MORE LIKE A CAT THAT CAN'T HELP BUT POKE ITS NOSE IN. FOLLOWIN' THAT MAN, TALKIN' TO HIM DESPITE HIS OBVIOUS DISINCLINE.



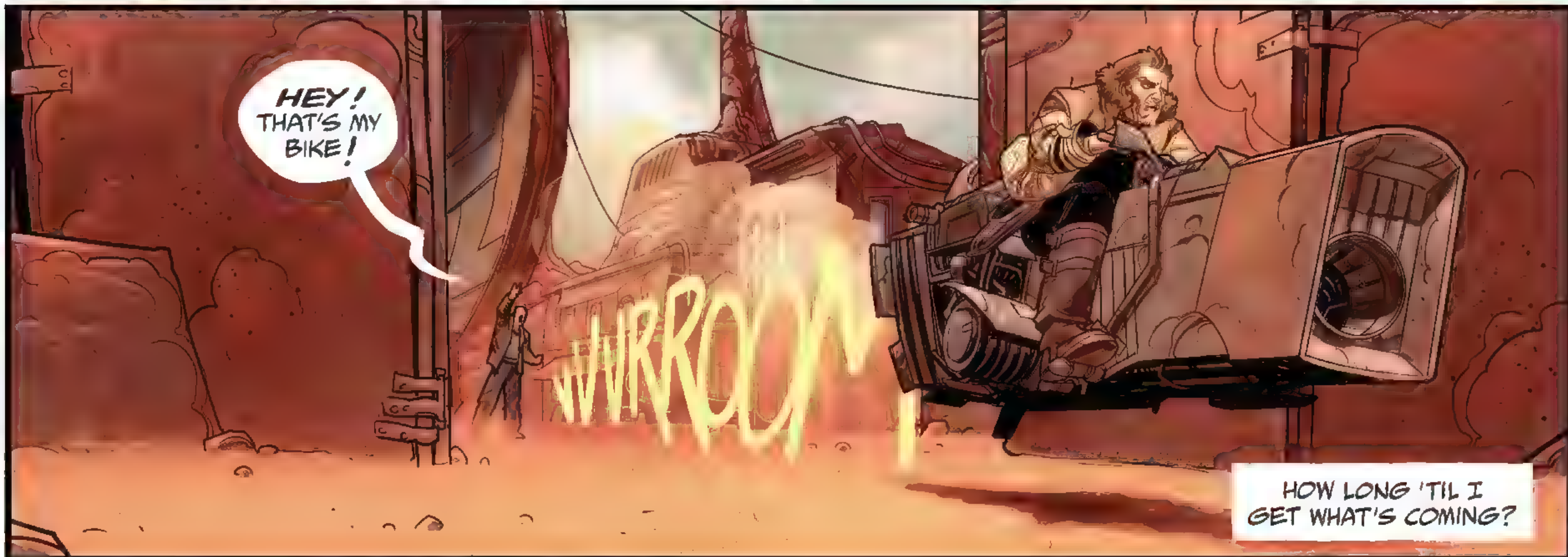
FOLLOWED HIM HERE?

IN HERE. OUT THERE TILL I COULDN'T SEE NEITHER FACE. TO THE MOUNTAINS, I GUESS.



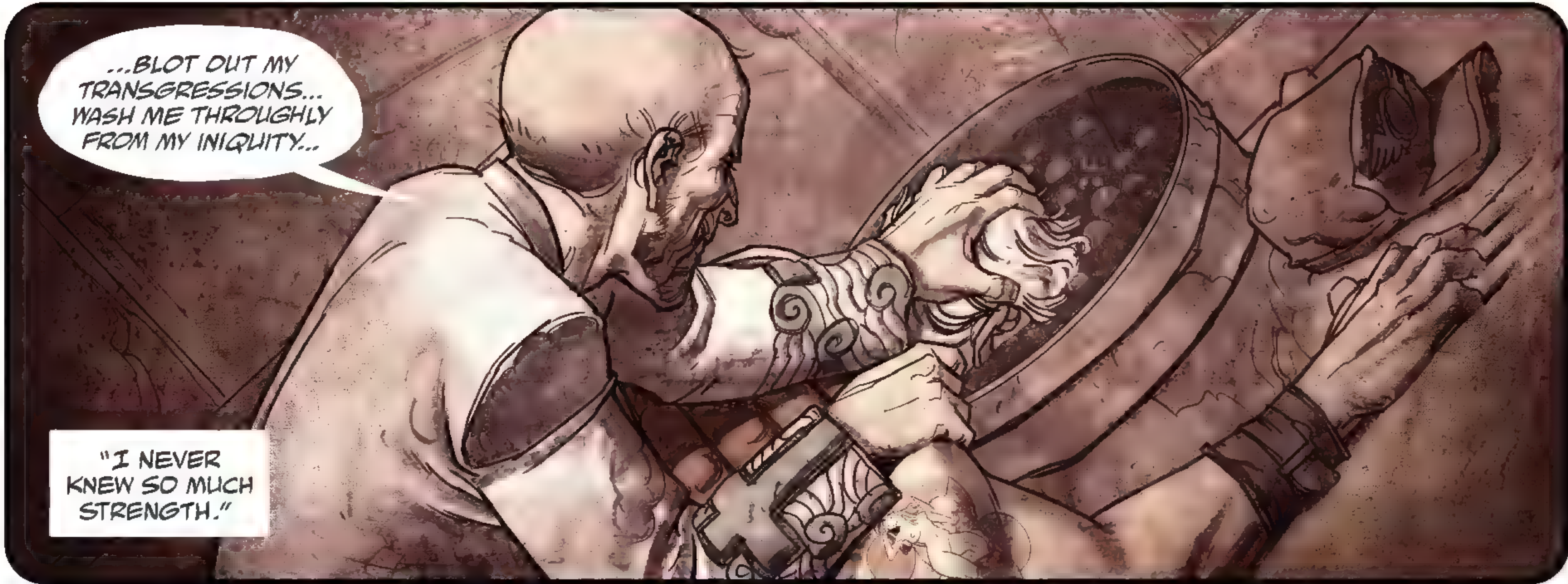
YOU LET THAT LITTLE GIRL FOLLOW THAT MANIAC?

SHE EVER COMES BACK, YOU BE MY GUEST AND TRY TO TELL THAT GIRL WHAT'S WHAT.



HEY! THAT'S MY BIKE!

HOW LONG 'TIL I GET WHAT'S COMING?



...BLOT OUT MY
TRANSGRESSIONS...
WASH ME THOROUGHLY
FROM MY INIQUITY...

"I NEVER
KNEW SO MUCH
STRENGTH."



I WAS
ABSOLVED
BEFORE HIS
LEG STOPPED
TWISTING IN
THE DIRT.

WHY
ARE YOU
TELLING
ME ALL
THIS?



I
BELIEVE
YOU **KNOW**
WHY YOU ARE
HERE.

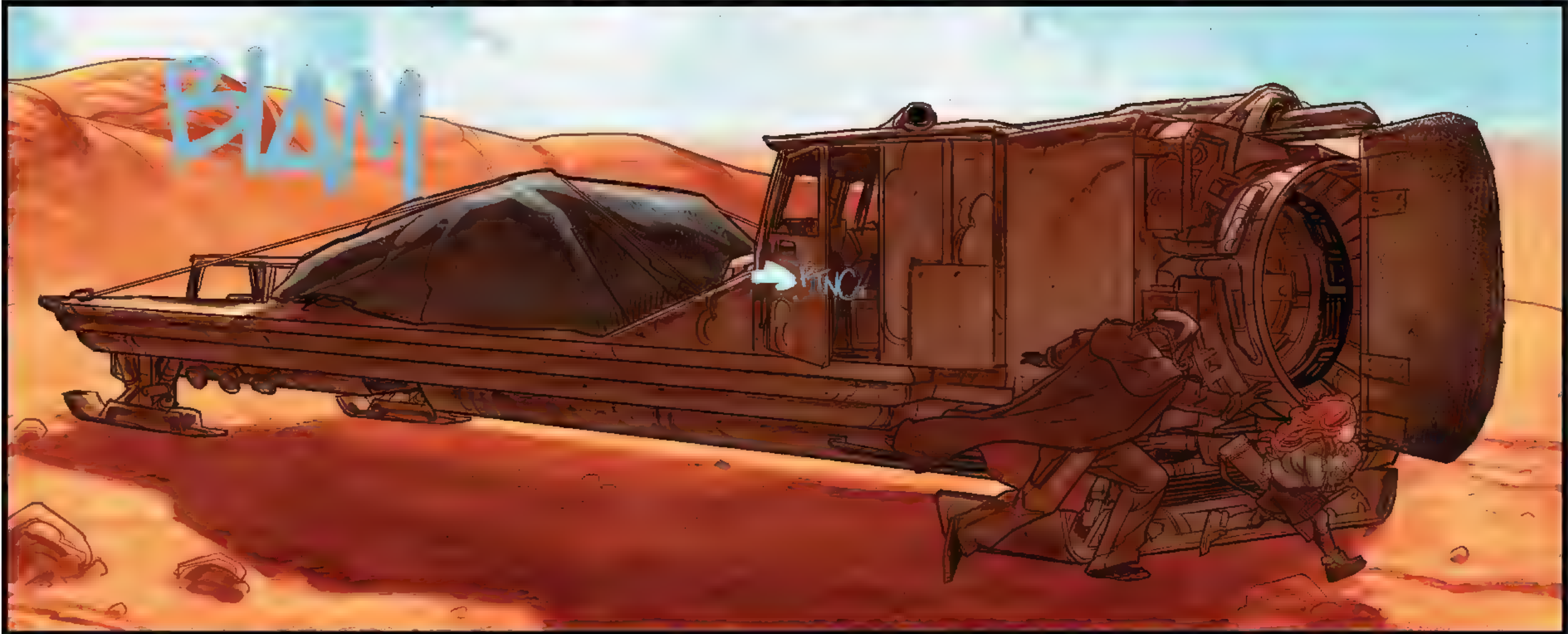
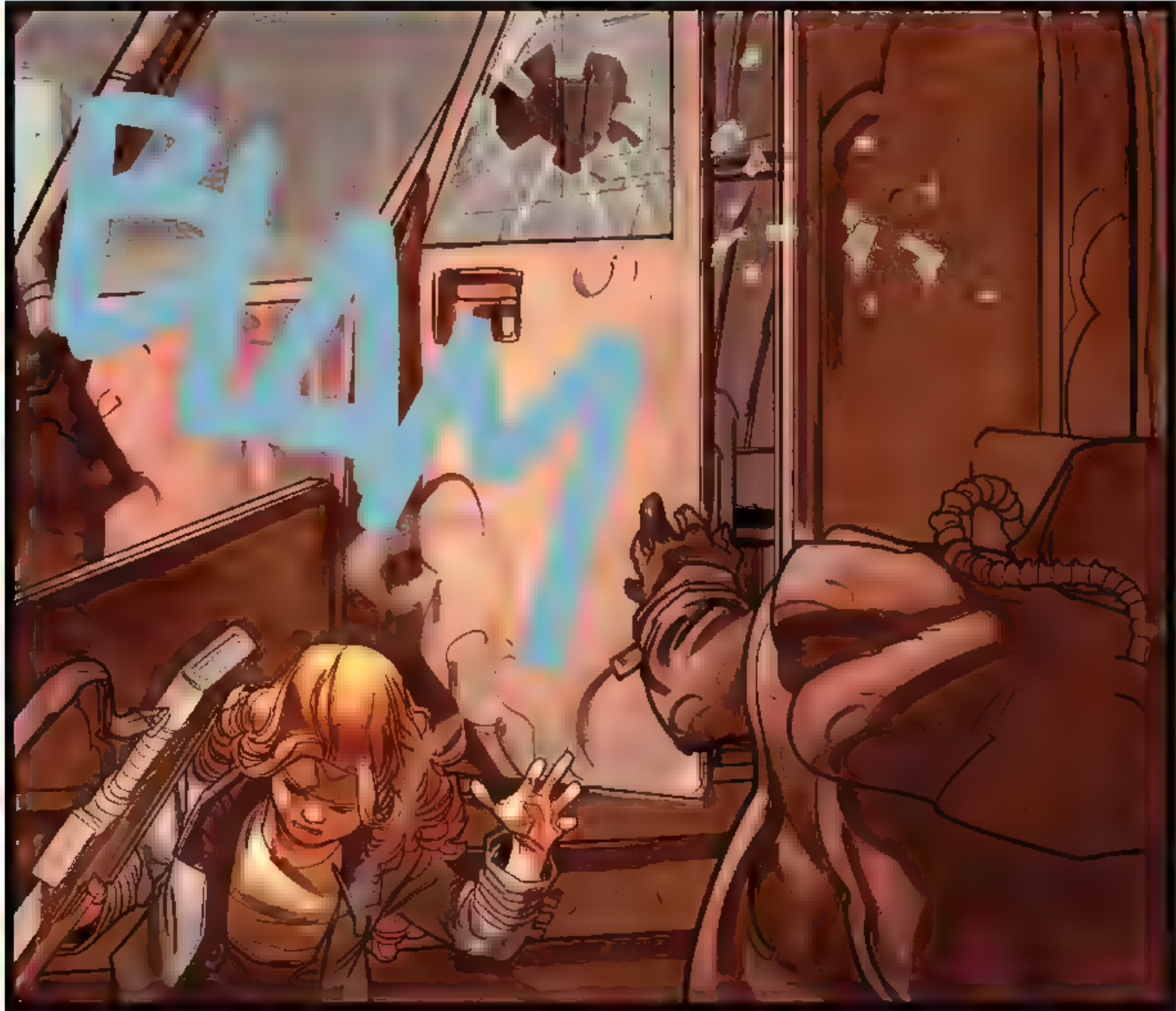
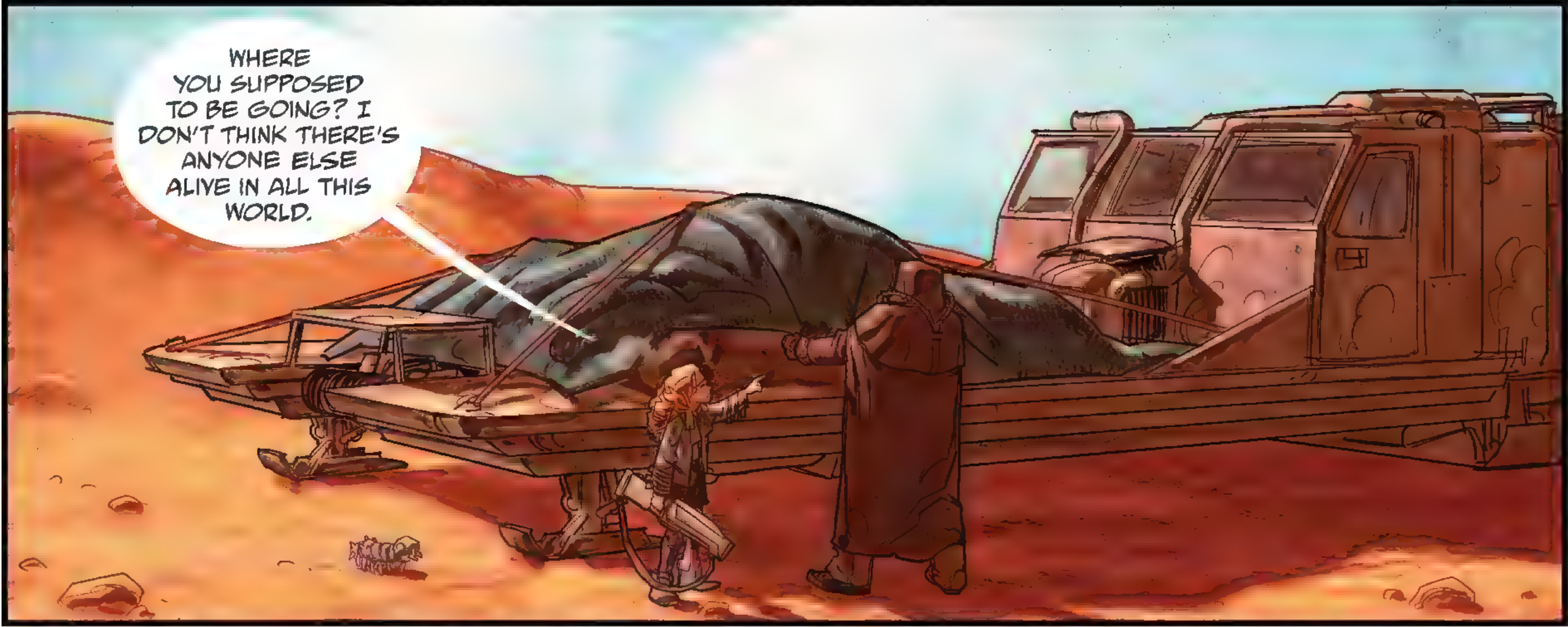
YOU
GONNA
JUDGE **ME**,
NOW?

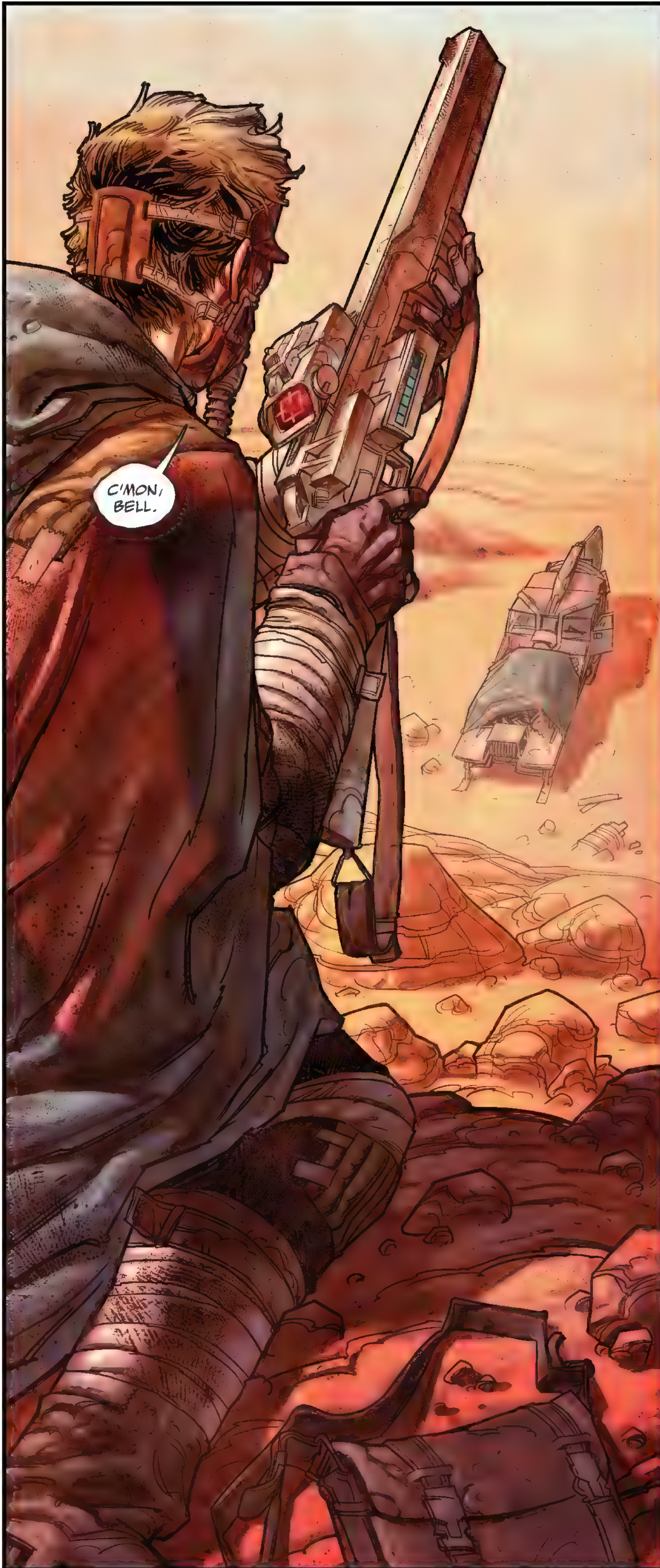


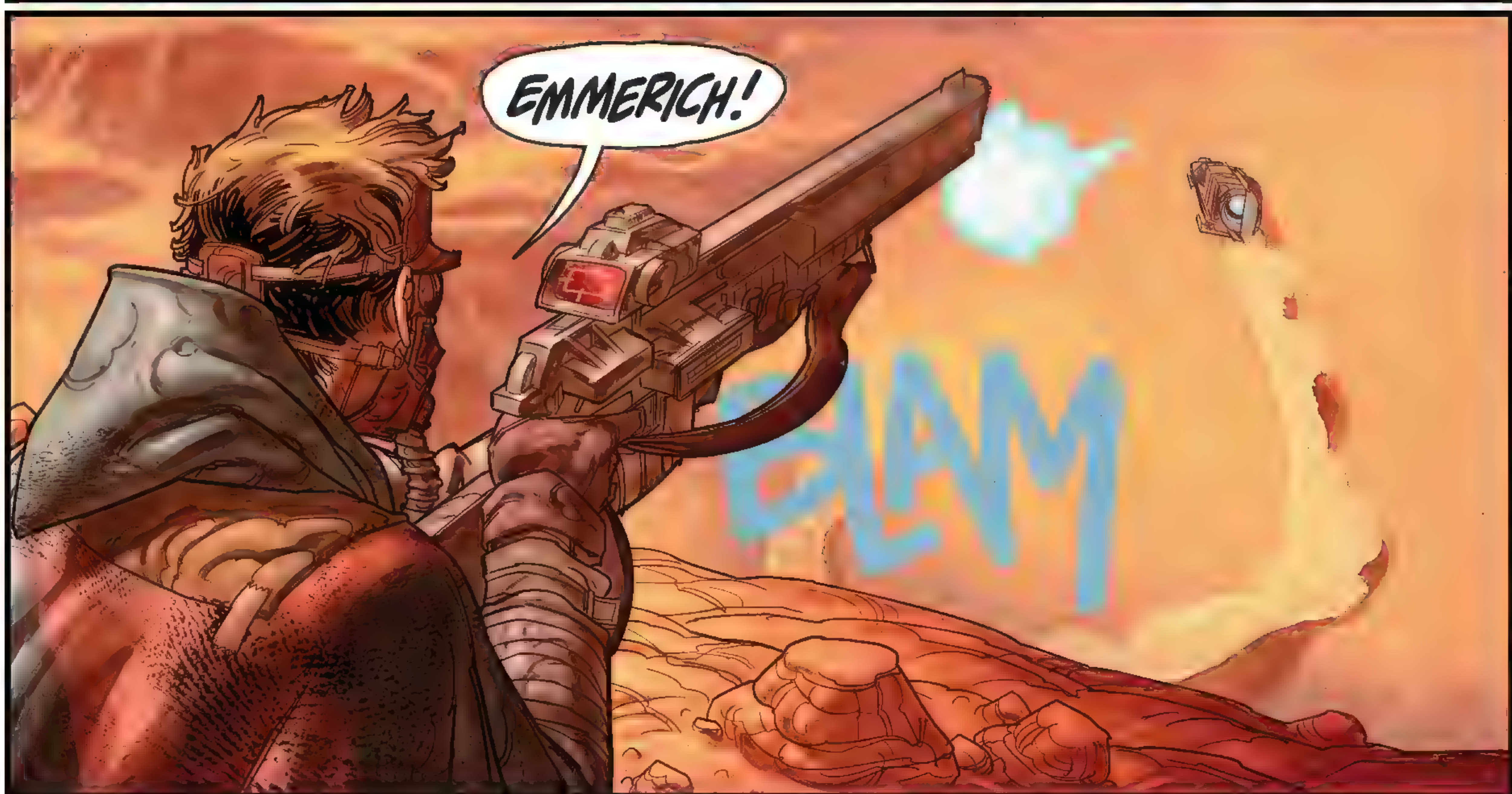
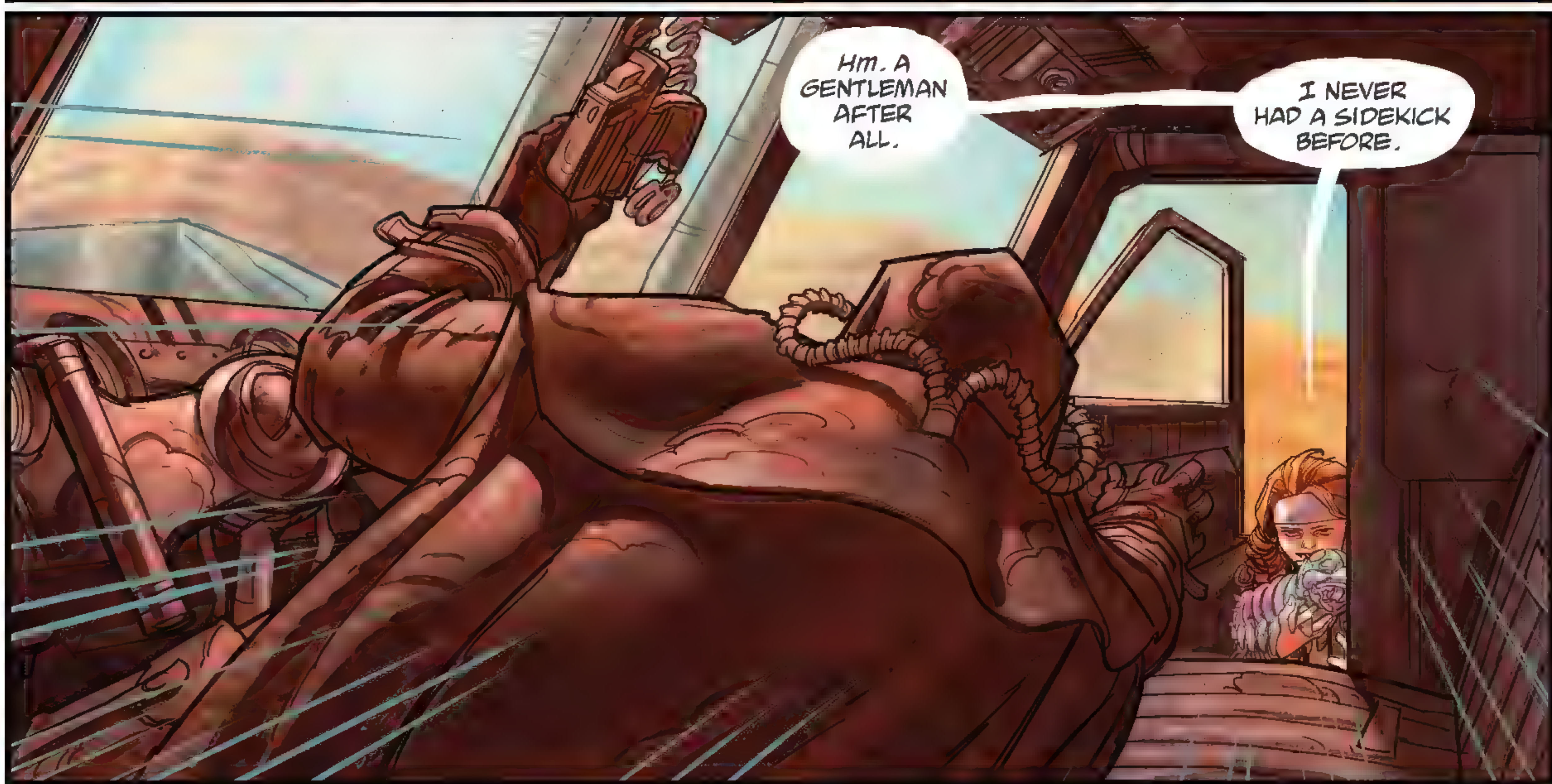
PLEASE
BELIEVE
THAT I'VE NO
PERSONAL
GRIEVANCE,
JONAH.

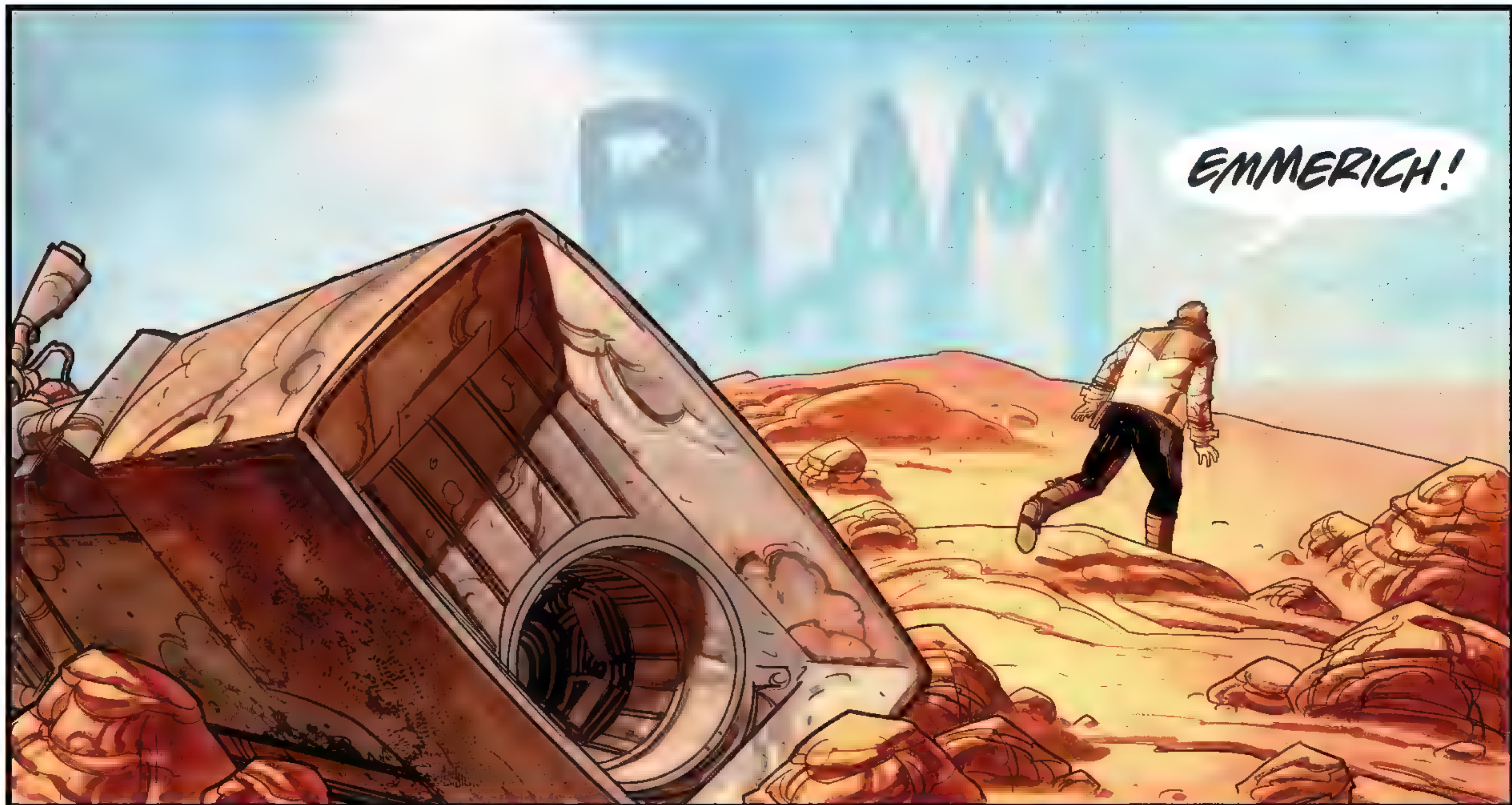


IT IS **HIS**
GAZE THAT KNOWS
YOUR SIN.





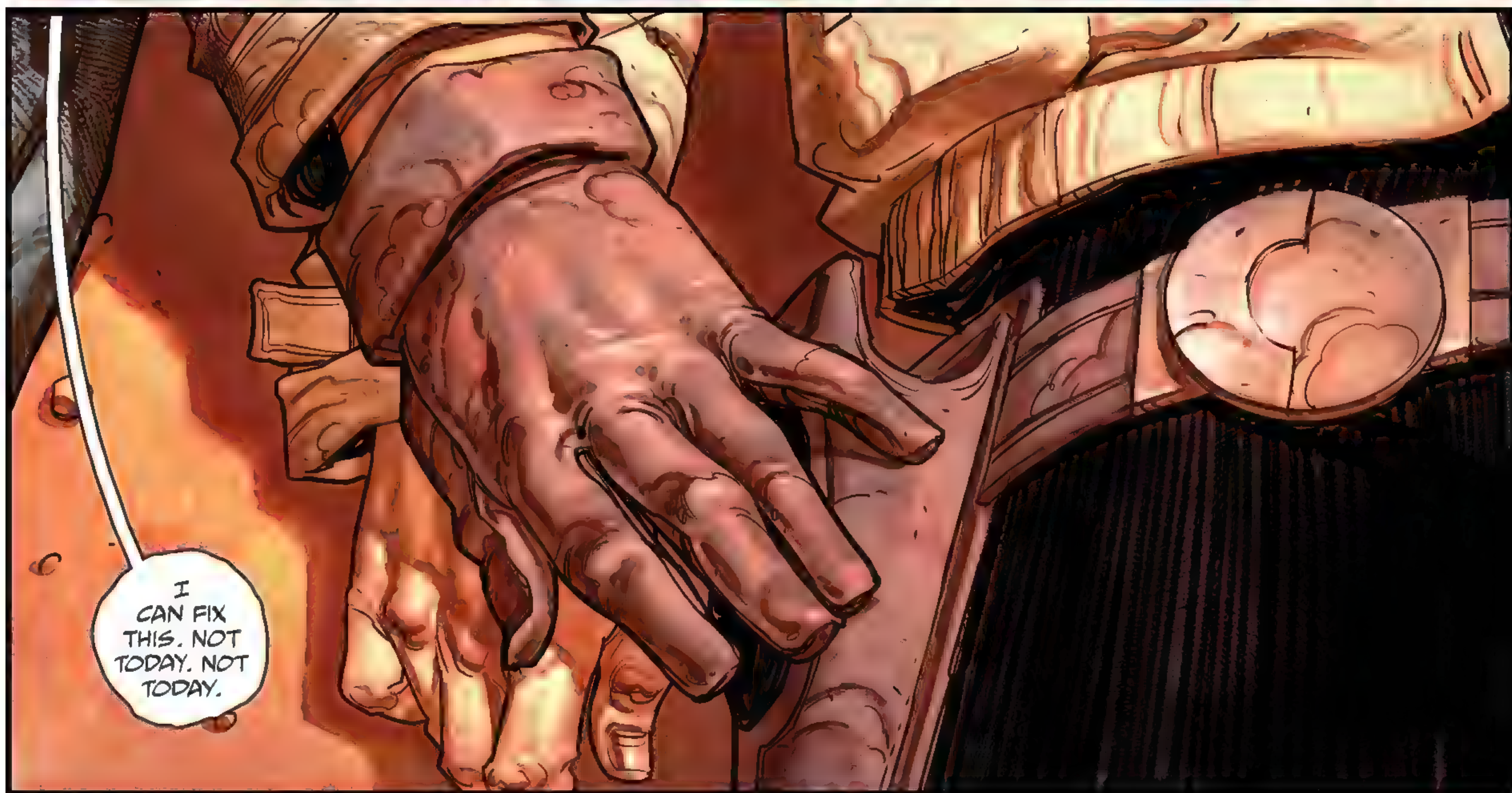




EMMERICH!



WHO IN
HELL'RE...



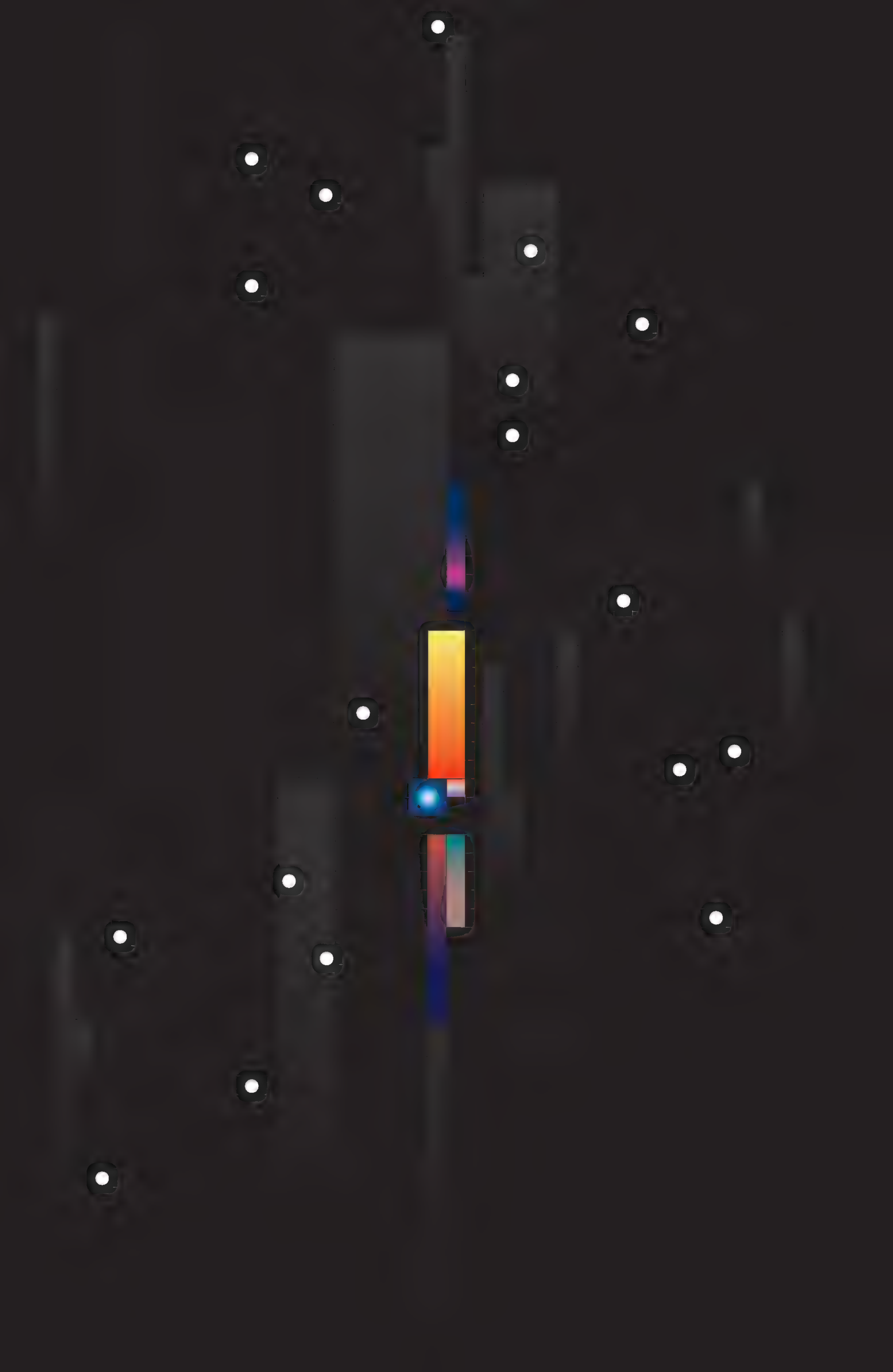
THE QUIET'S
WORST OF ALL.

AND THEN THE
COLD. AND THEN
THE ACHE.



THE THINGS I
DON'T KNOW
MULTIPLYING.





CHAPTER 5
GO



THE WHOLE NIGHT
BETWEEN US.



FURTHER
EVERY TIME
I CLOSE
MY EYES.



I KNOW THE
WEIGHT'S RIGHT
BEFORE I CHECK
THE ACTION.



BUT I WON'T
TRUST THIS
PLACE.



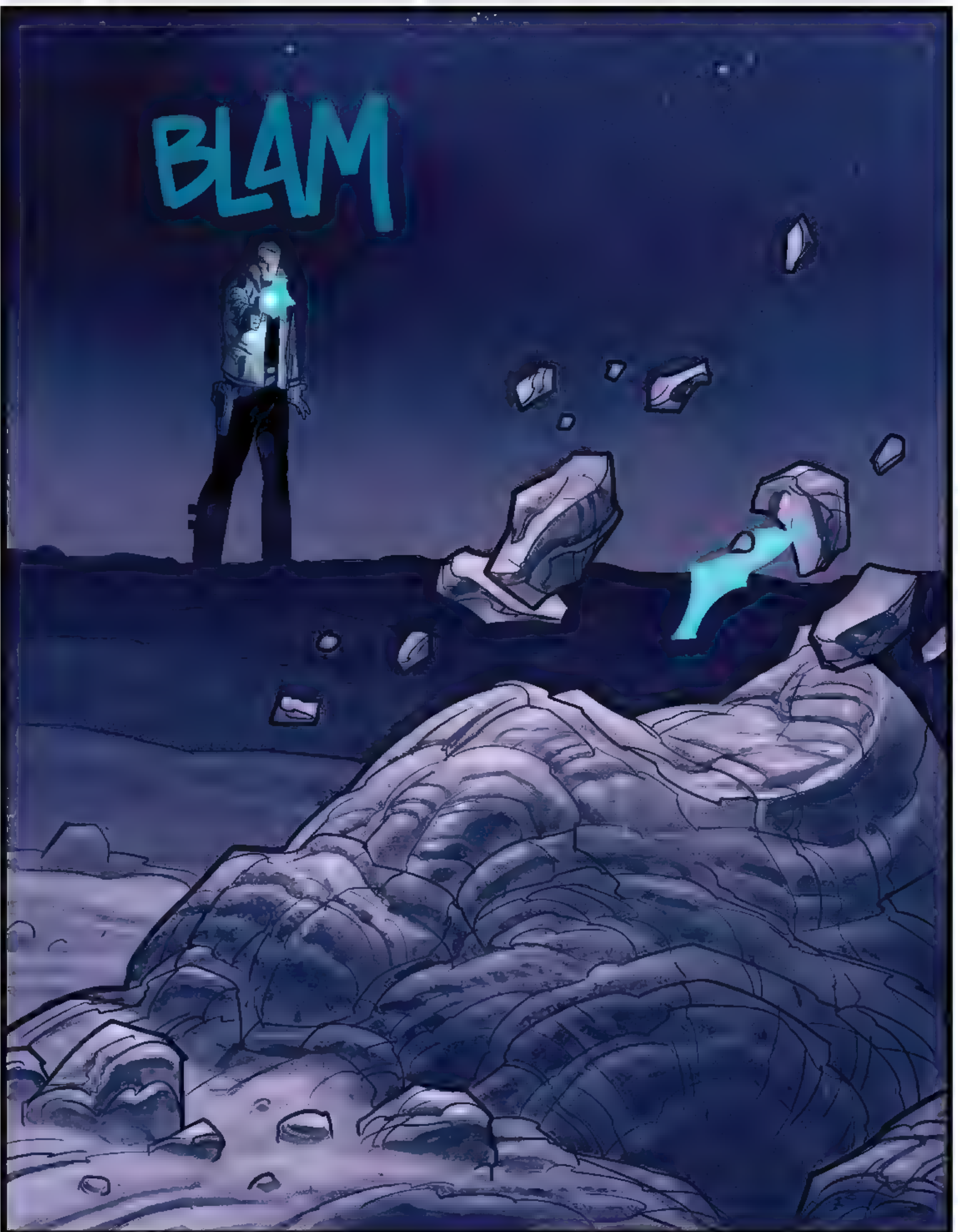
LIKE A FEAR OF
BEIN' READY.

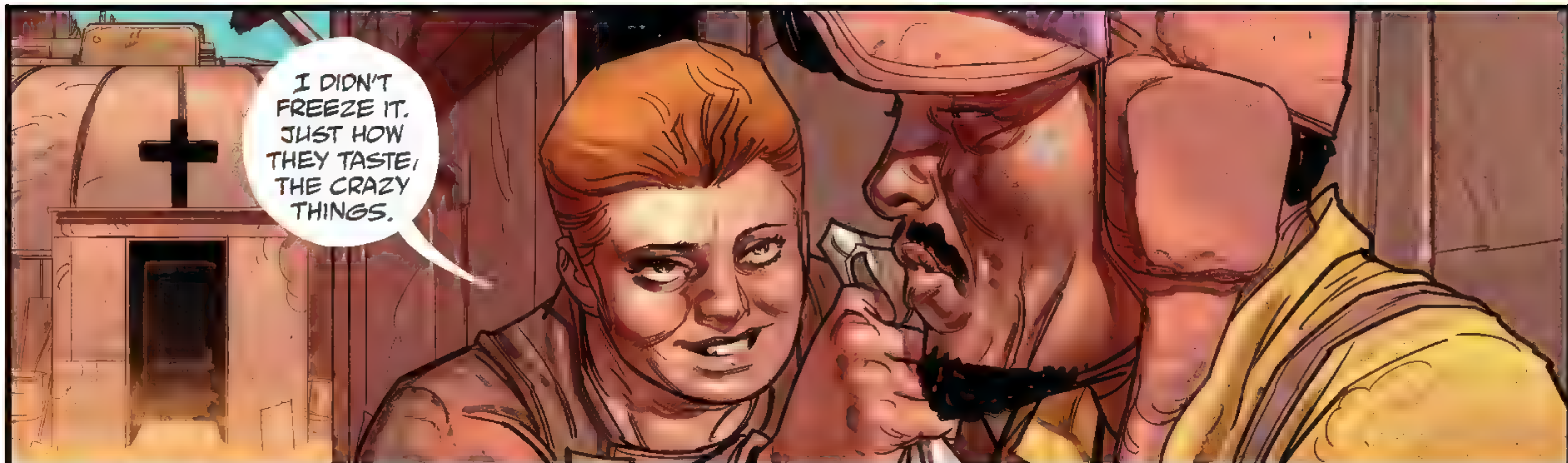


FEAR OF REVENGE ONCE
I'M IN SIGHT OF IT.

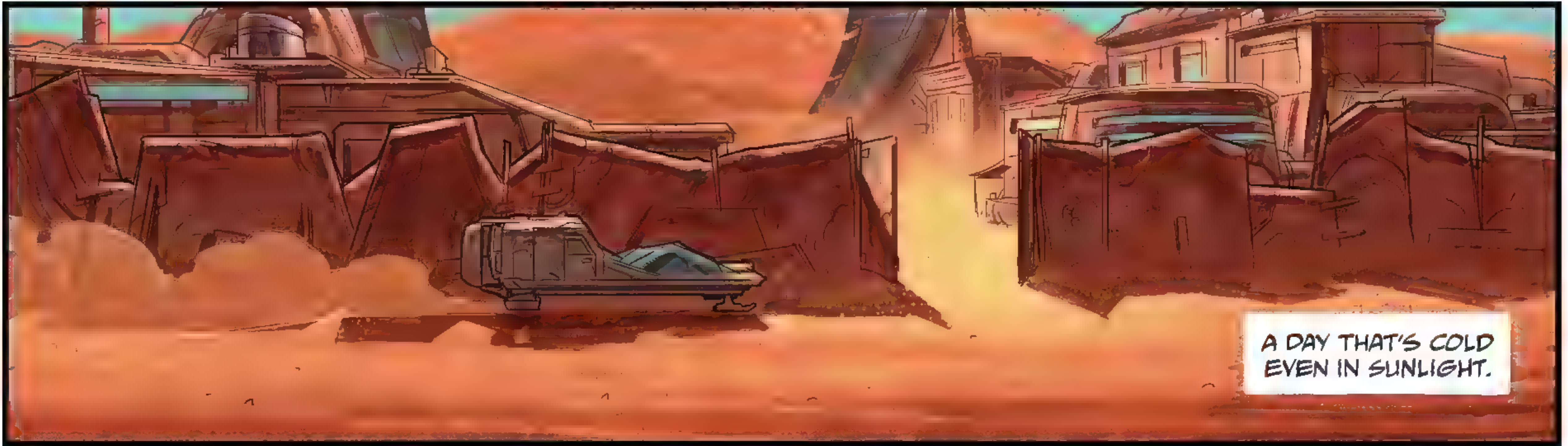


BLAM

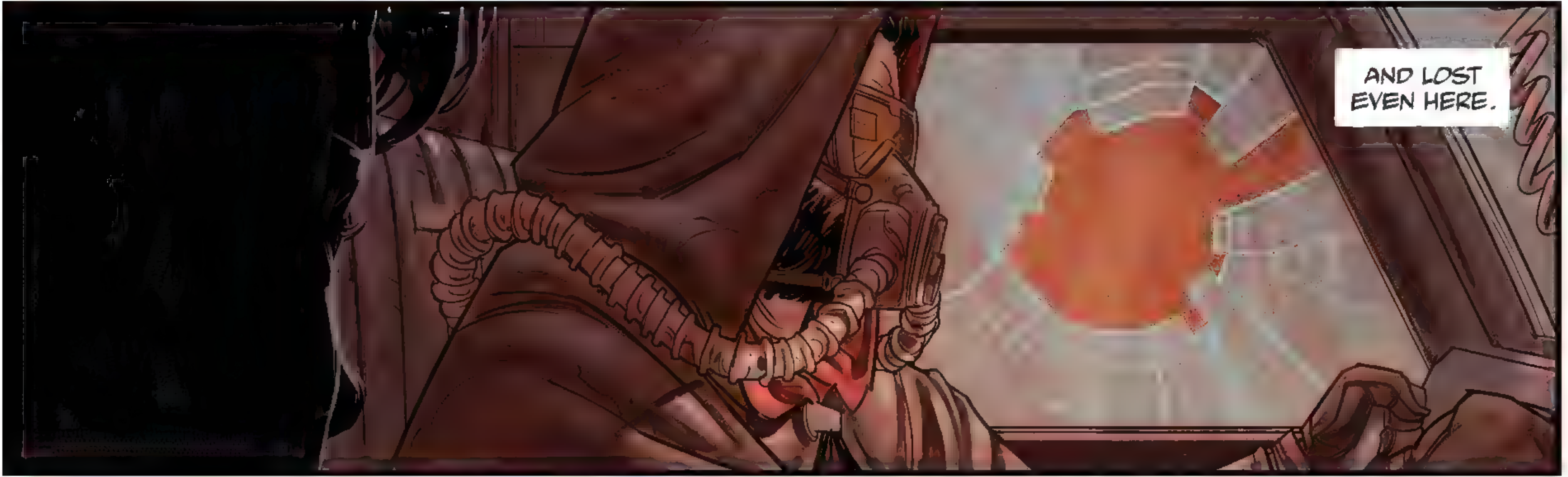








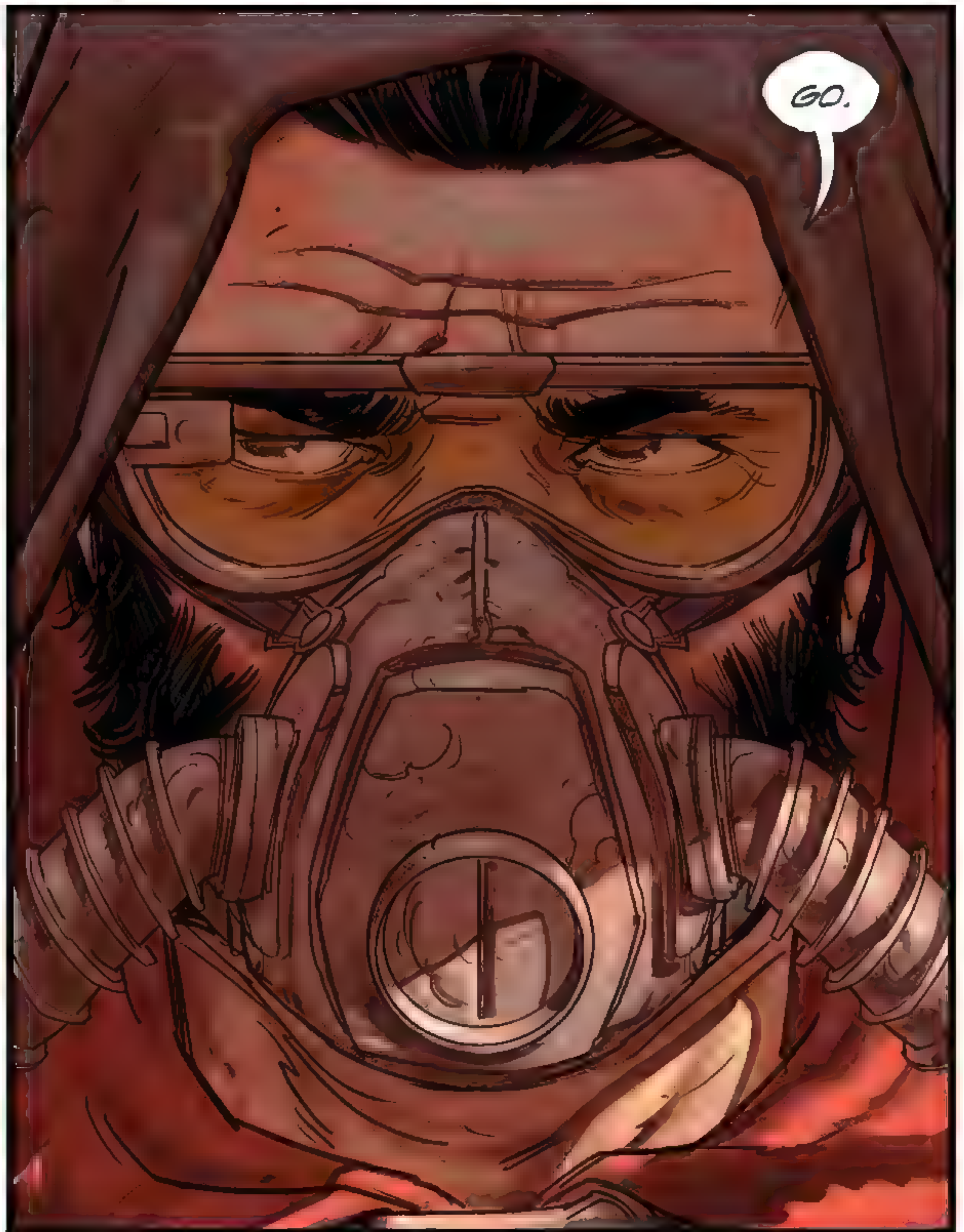
A DAY THAT'S COLD
EVEN IN SUNLIGHT.



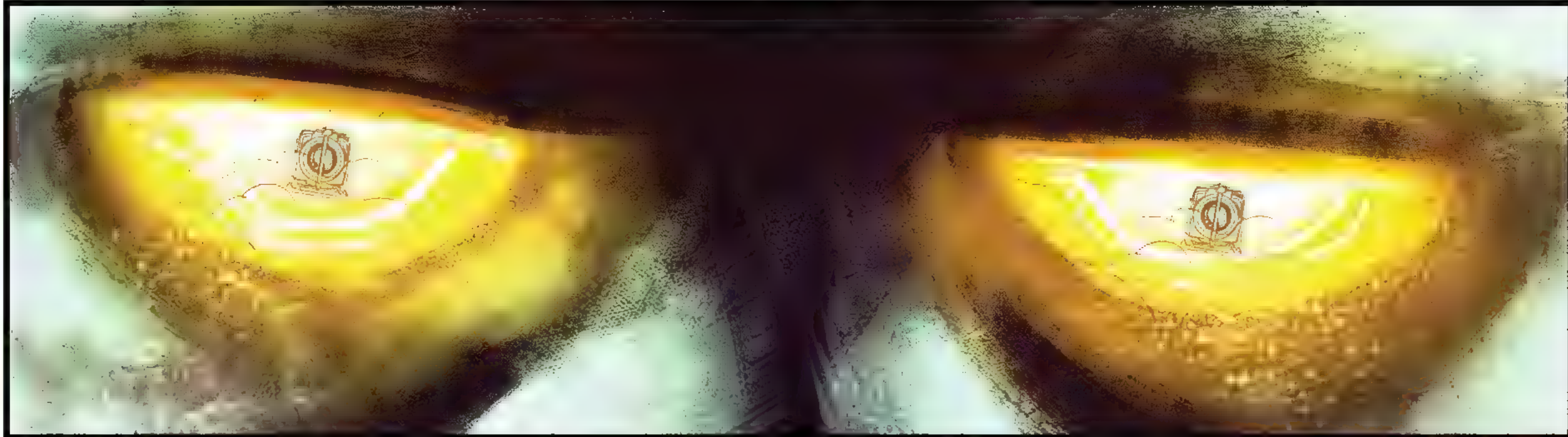
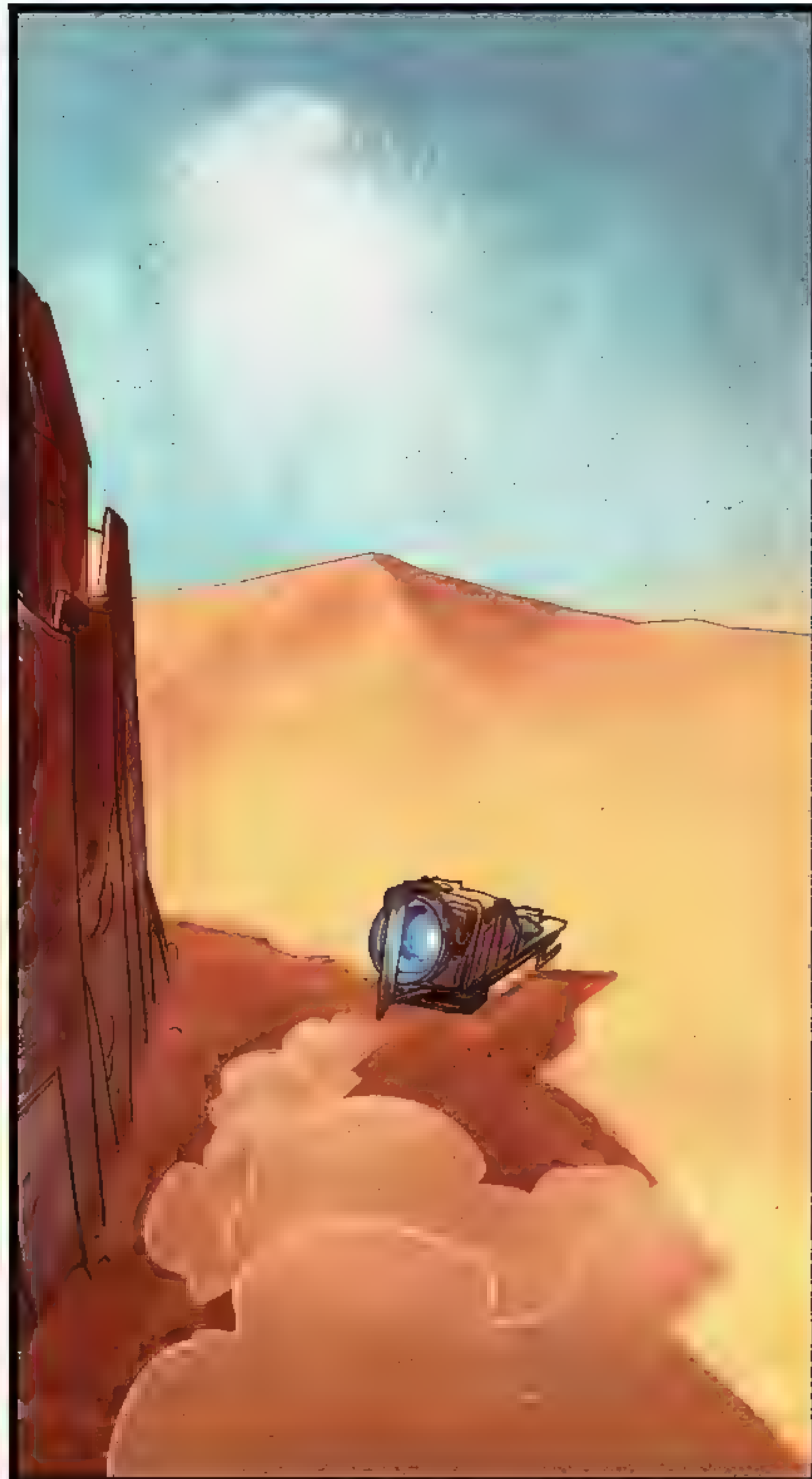
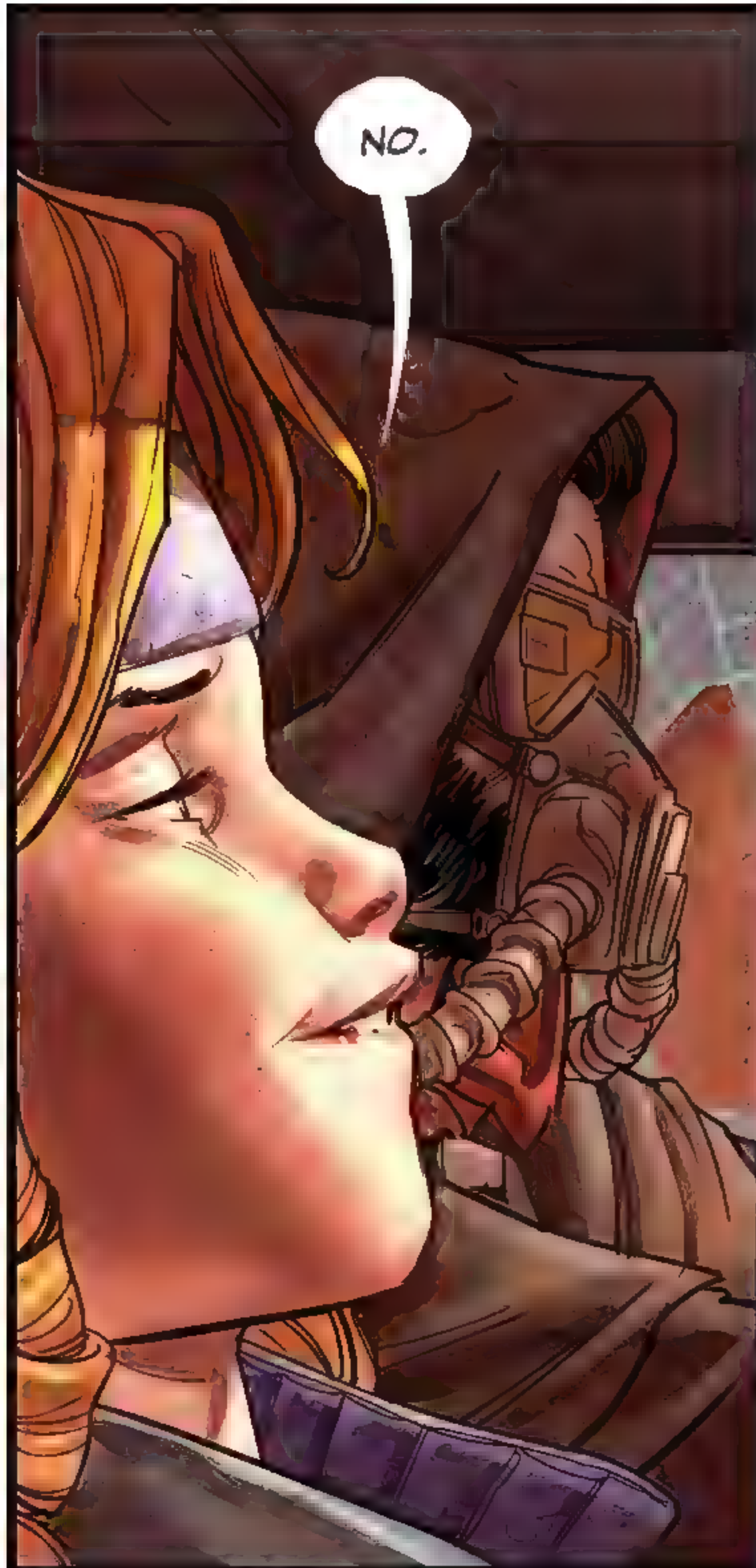
AND LOST
EVEN HERE.



SPEAK
TO ME! IF YOU
WANT ME TO
LEAVE JUST OPEN
YOUR MOUTH AND
SAY IT. TELL ME
TO GO.



GO.



LEFT
HERE WITH
GHOSTS
AND SAND,
NOT IN OR
OUT.



JUST
GONE.

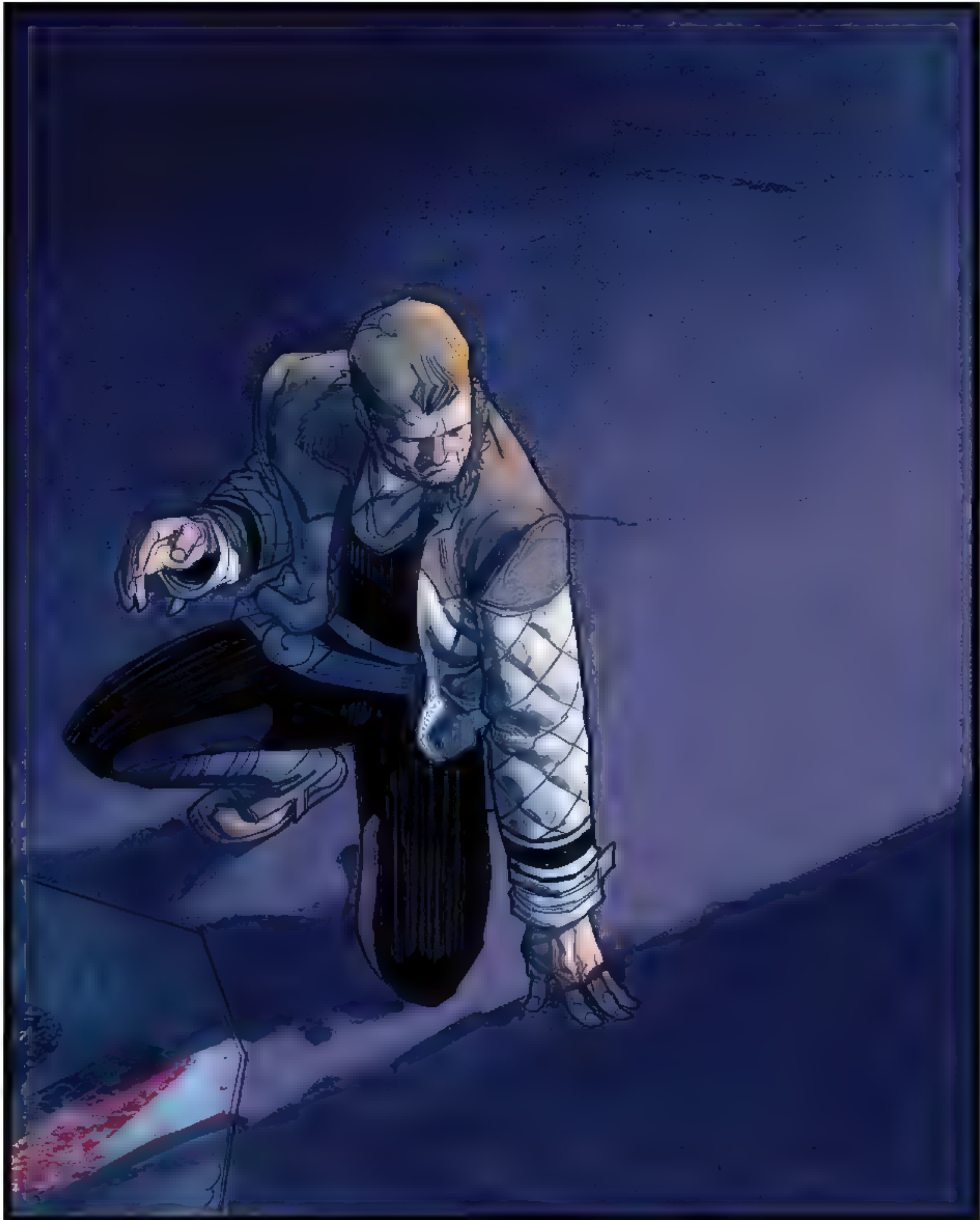


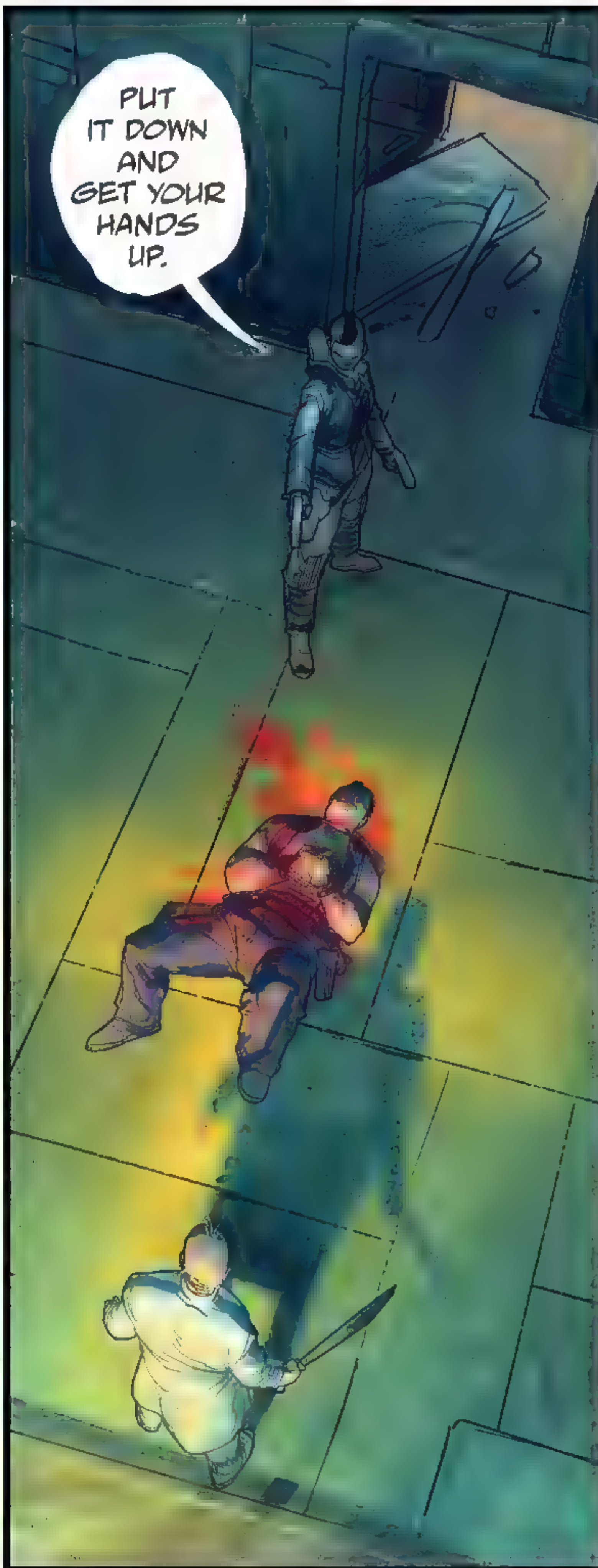
YOU
WON'T COME
BACK.



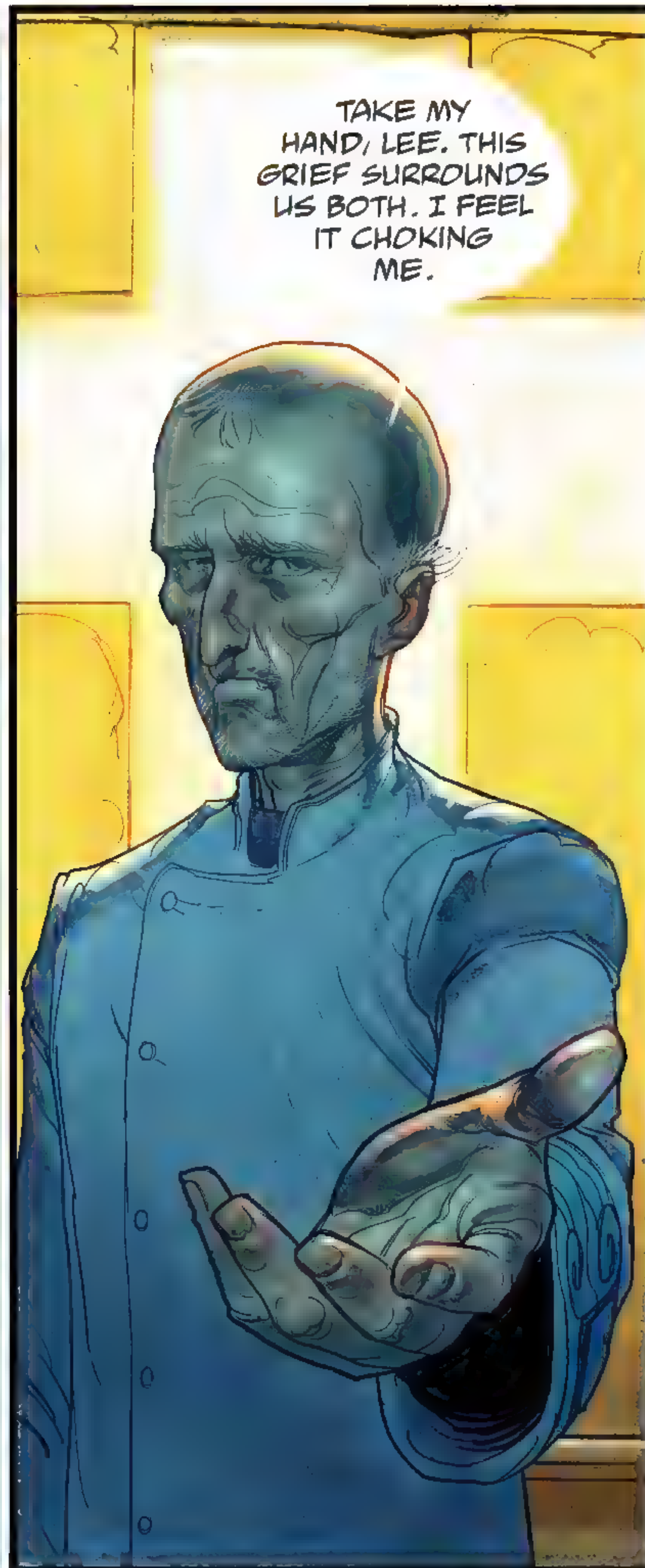
MY PAST
LIKE BONES
SUNK IN
THE DIRT.







PUT
IT DOWN
AND
GET YOUR
HANDS
UP.



TAKE MY
HAND, LEE. THIS
GRIEF SURROUNDS
US BOTH. I FEEL
IT CHOKING
ME.

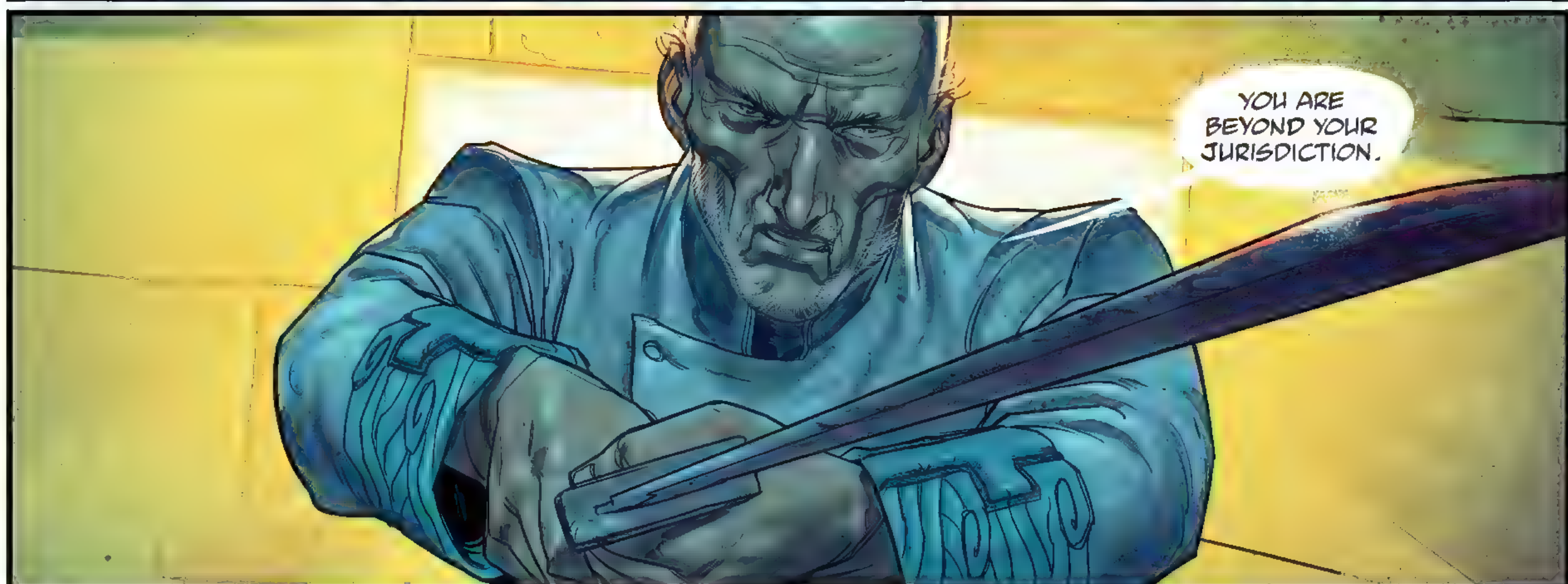
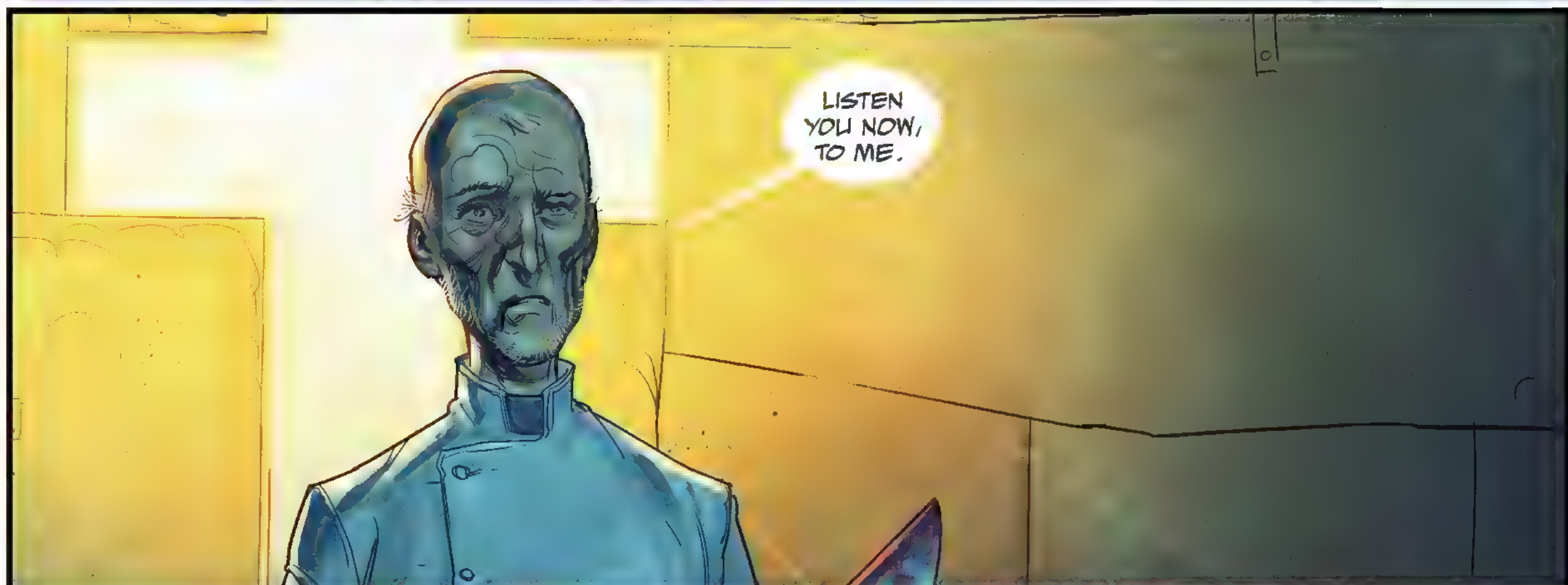


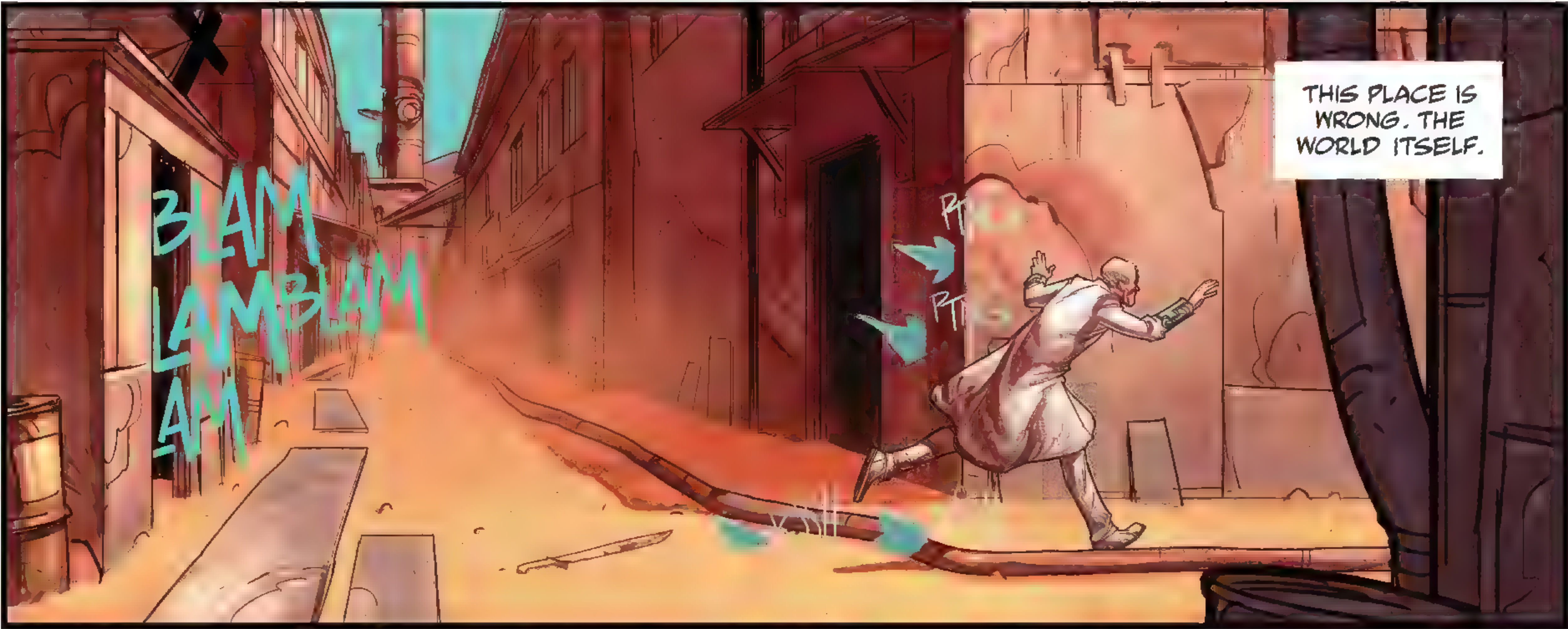
HIS
WORD IS
STRONG AND
HIS HAND IS
FINAL.



THERE IS
STILL TIME. YOU CAN
STAND WITH HIM AND
WALK ABOVE THE FIRE.
YOU CAN SURVIVE
THIS.

IN HIS
LIGHT YOU CAN
SURVIVE.

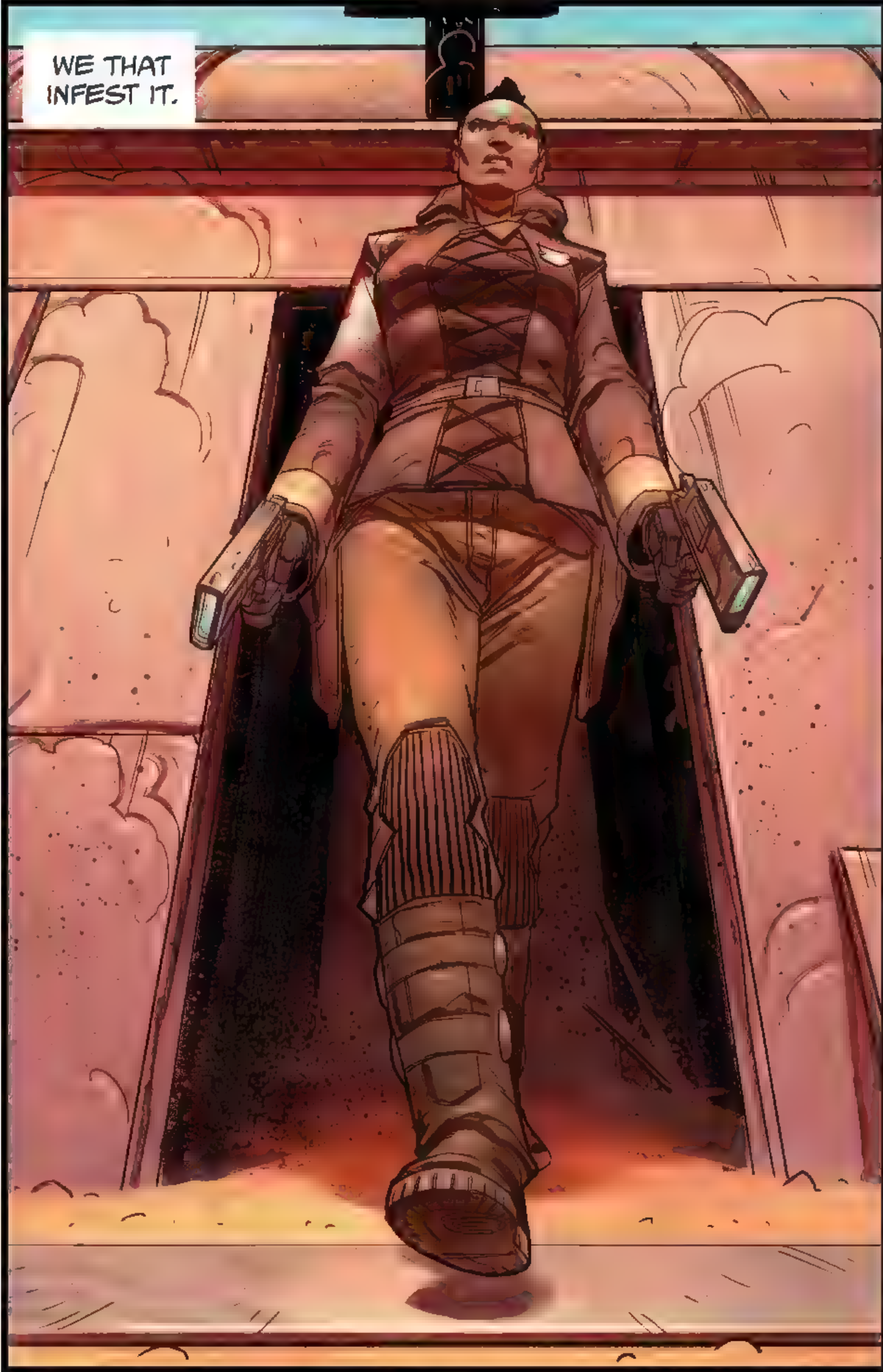




THIS PLACE IS
WRONG. THE
WORLD ITSELF.

BLAM
LAMB
LAM
AM

PT
PT

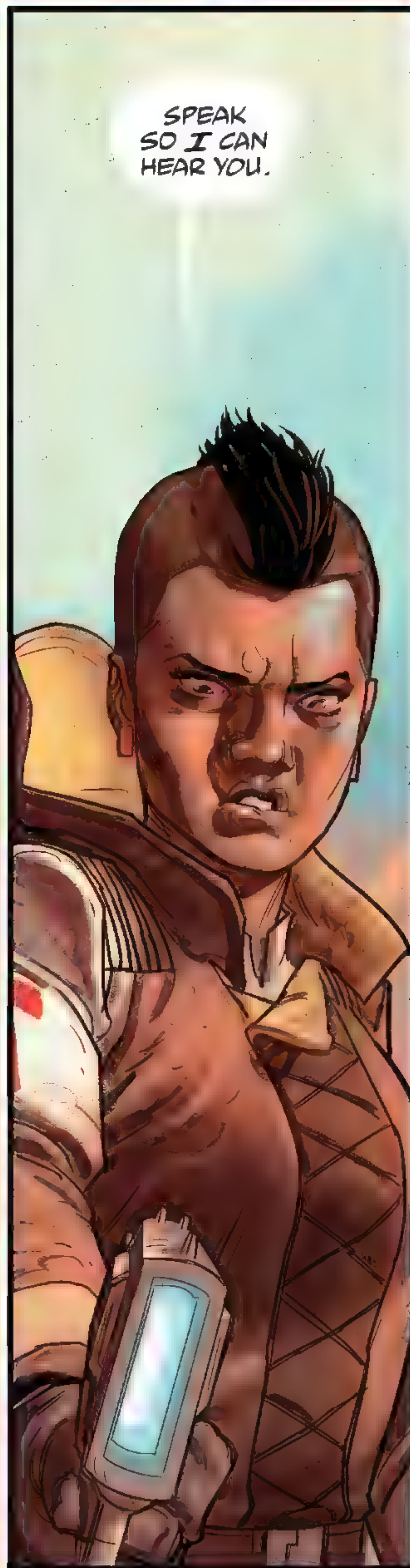
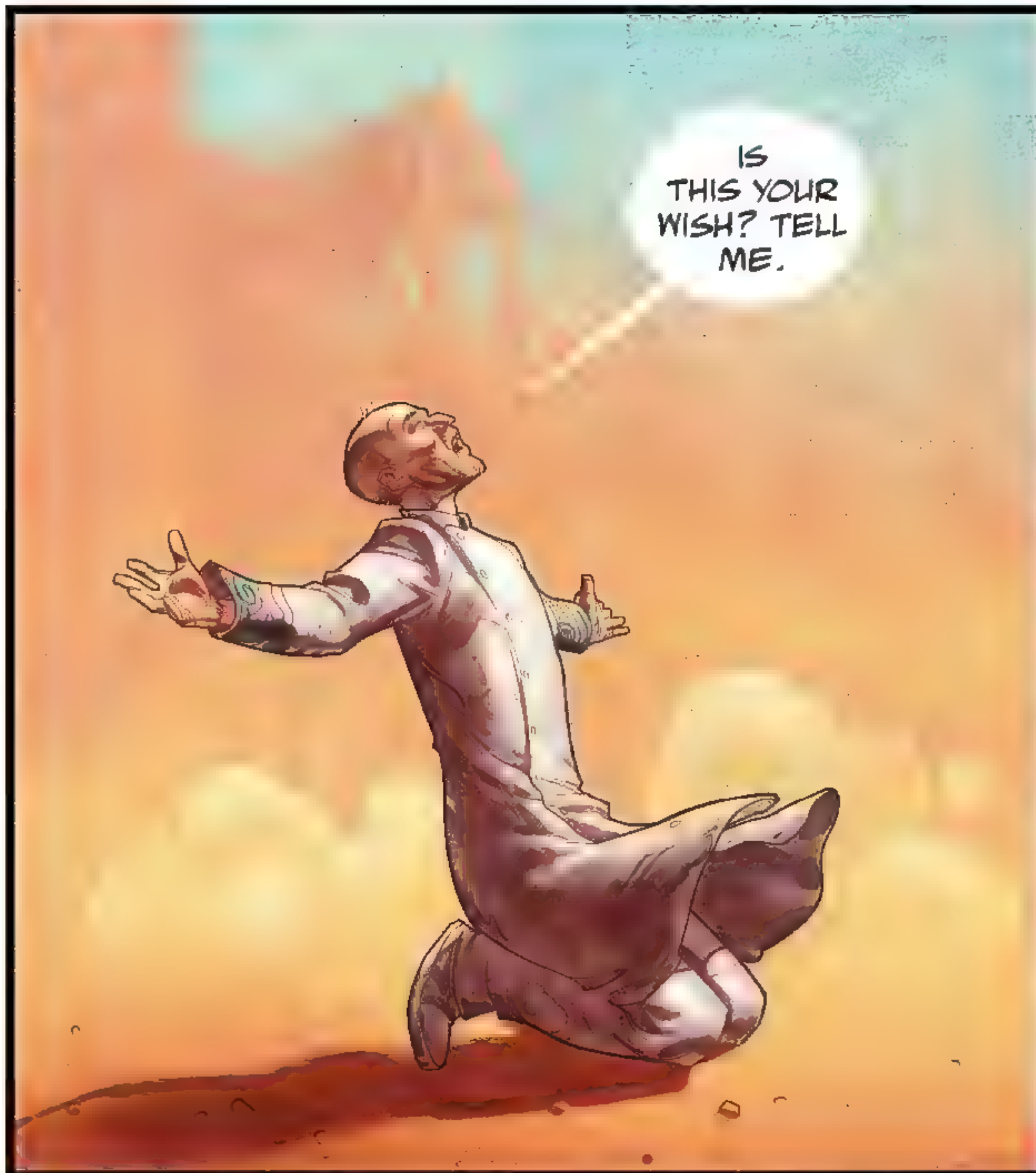


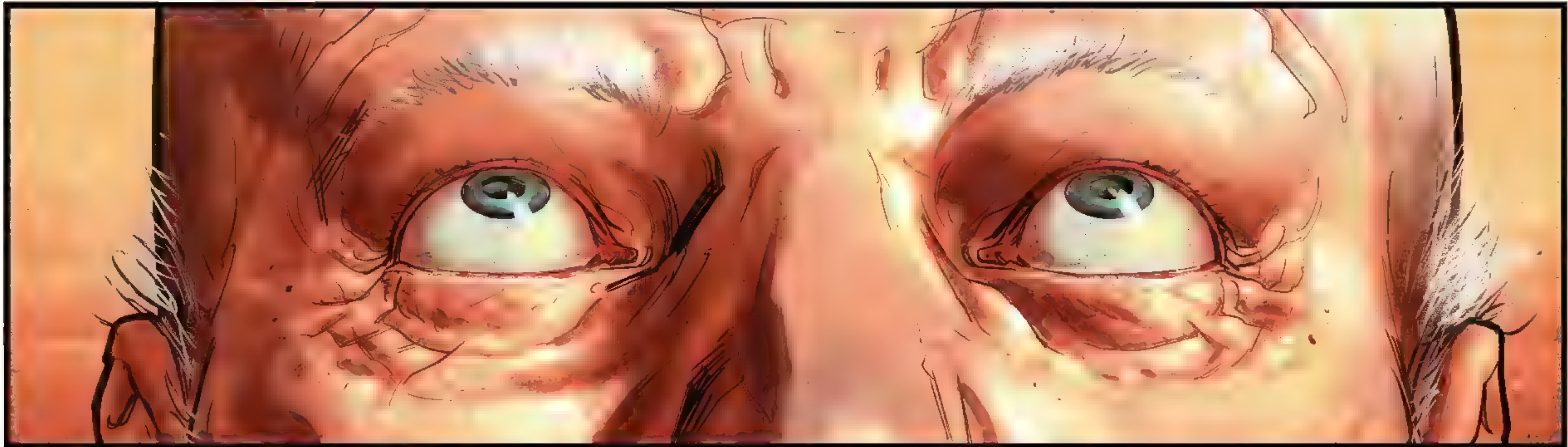
WE THAT
INFEST IT.



OPEN
UP, IN GOD'S
NAME!







BLOT OUT MY
TRANSGRESSIONS...
WASH ME THOROUGHLY
FROM MY INIQUITY.



YOU DON'T
GET YOUR
ABSOLUTION.



WALKED
IN THAT
COLD UNTIL
THE NIGHT
HAD
ALMOST
LEFT ME.

TOWARDS
WHAT'S
NEXT. AWAY
FROM
CAUTION.

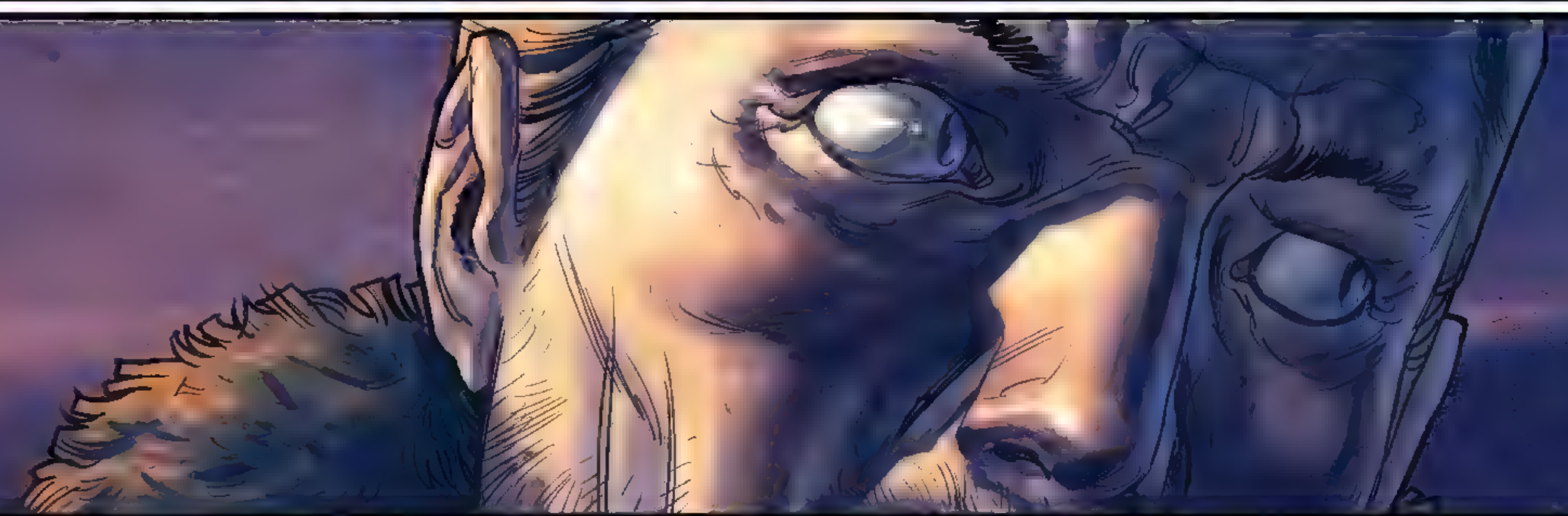
THE
SUNSET
AT
HERN JENSE

THE
WHITE

THE NEW
DAY LIT A
WHOLE
WORLD
DEAD.



WHAT TIME WAS
LEFT, IT TWISTED
ALL AROUND ME.



AND
THEN THAT
LIGHT ITSELF
WAS GONE.



END

An abstract graphic design on a dark background. It features a central vertical bar with a yellow-to-orange gradient, flanked by white and black rectangular blocks. A horizontal white bar is positioned below the central bar. Various other geometric shapes, including circles, squares, and rectangles, are scattered across the page, some with white highlights. The text 'COVER GALLERY' is prominently displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

COVER GALLERY

Esad Ribic, Cliff Chiang, Jason Latour,
Becky Cloonan, Marko Djurdjević,
Rafael Albuquerque, and Skottie Young



● Esad Ribic

ARTWORK BY
Esad Ribic





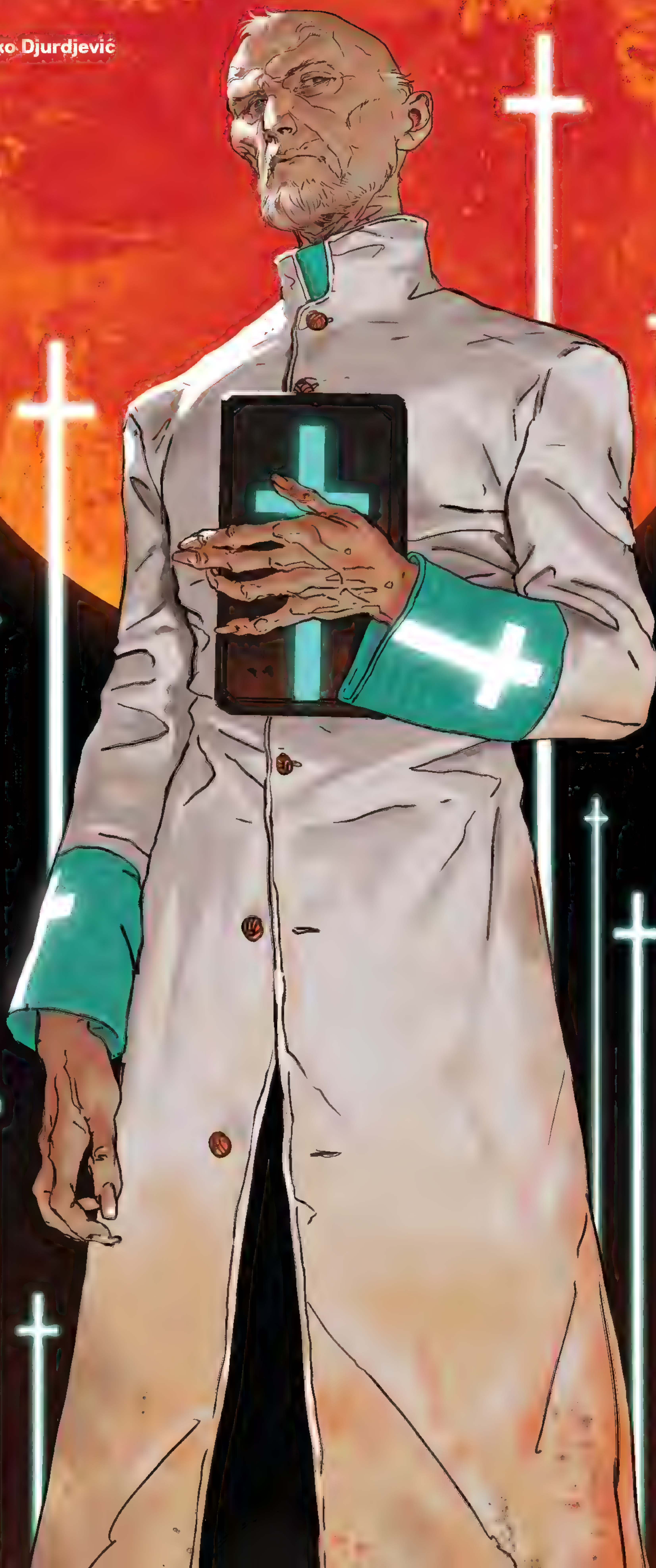




● Becky Cloonan

becky

● Marko Djurdjević



2000
Djurdjević

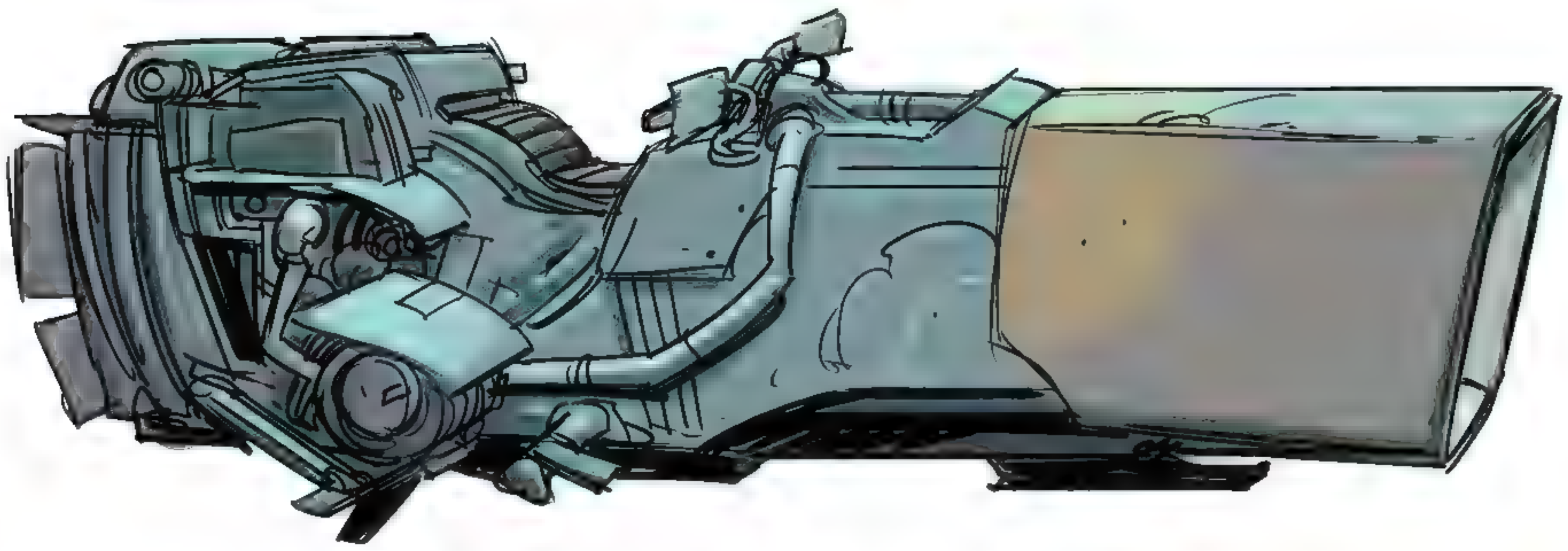




SY
14



CONCEPT
ART
● By Nic Klein



BELL
EMMERICH







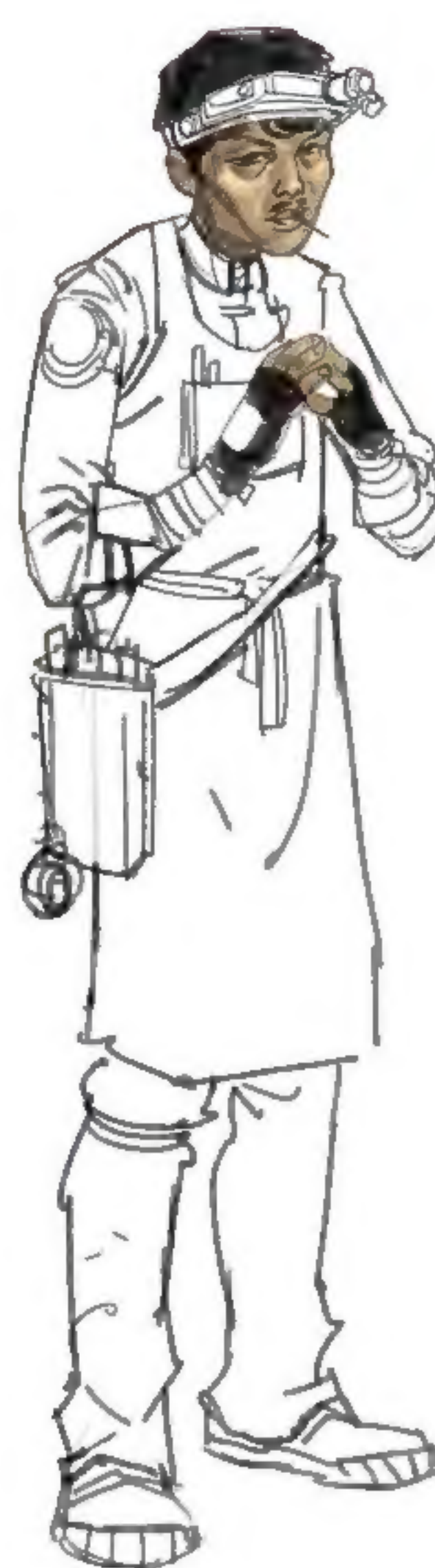
DELLA

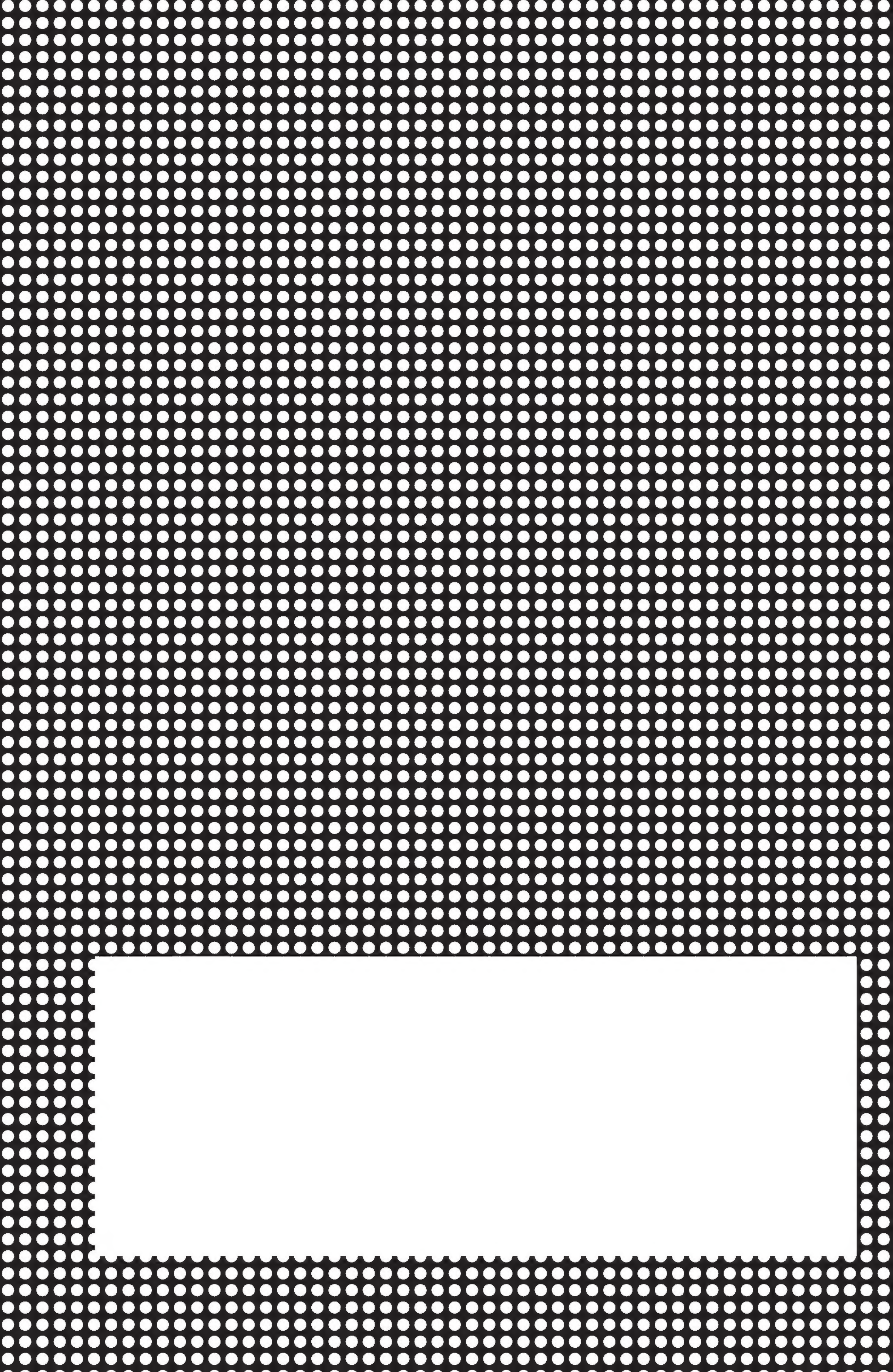


CHUCK



NENG





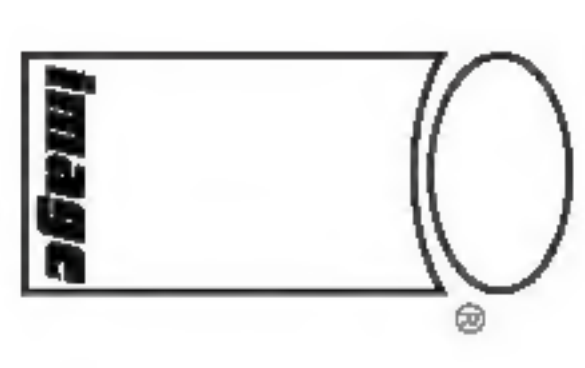
“A truly original sci-fi world.”
—Wired

“Crazy good and super gorgeous sci fi.”
—Jason Aaron, Southern Bastards, Thor

In its frantic rush to survive itself, mankind has spread across the universe, colonizing and strip-mining countless planets. Abram Pollux barely survives a crash landing on Ouro, a lawless backwater world where life is cheap. What starts as a struggle for survival quickly becomes a journey to the very edges of what it means to be human.

FROM THE CREATORS OF VIKING:
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Collects issues 1–5



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